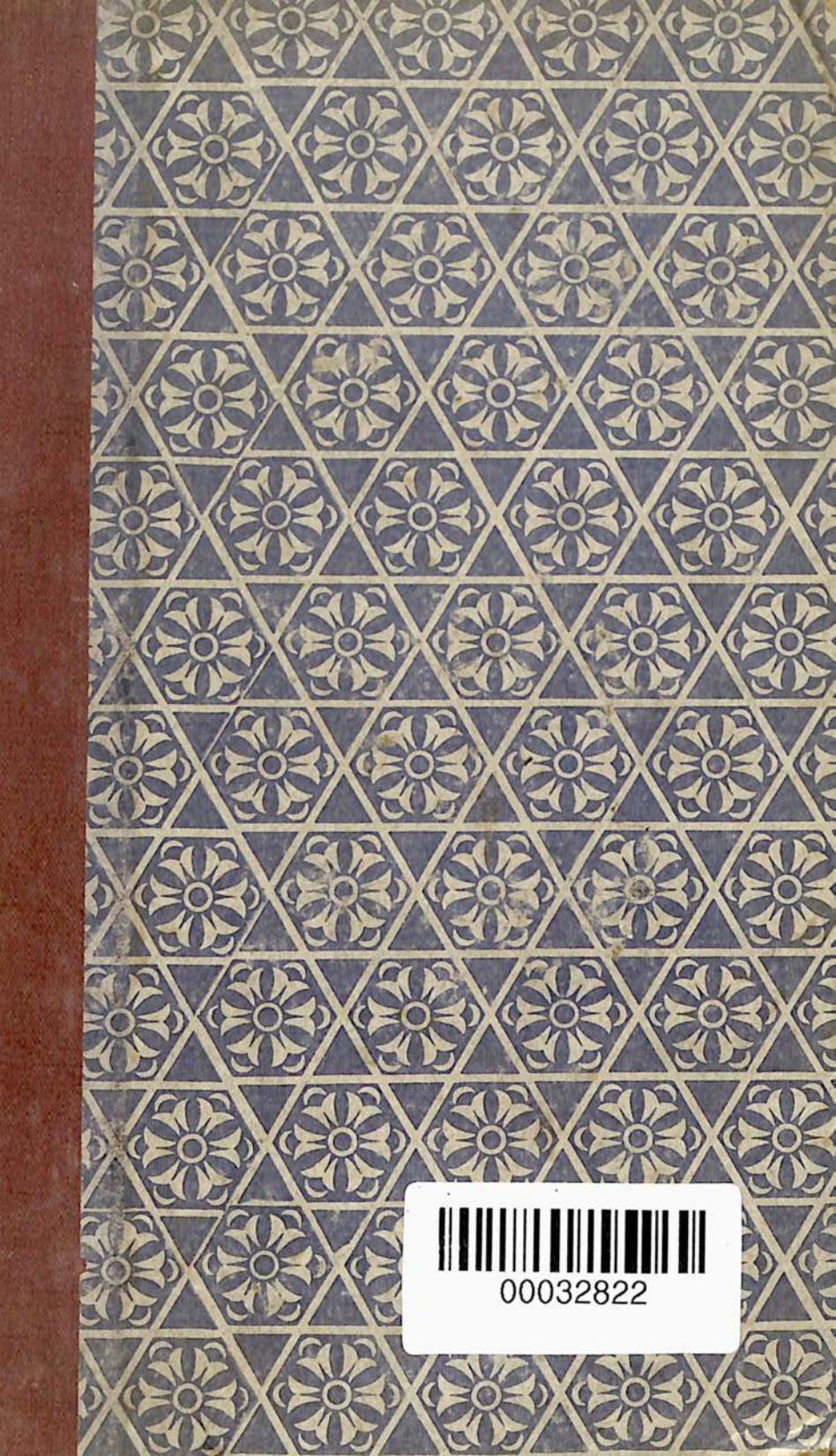
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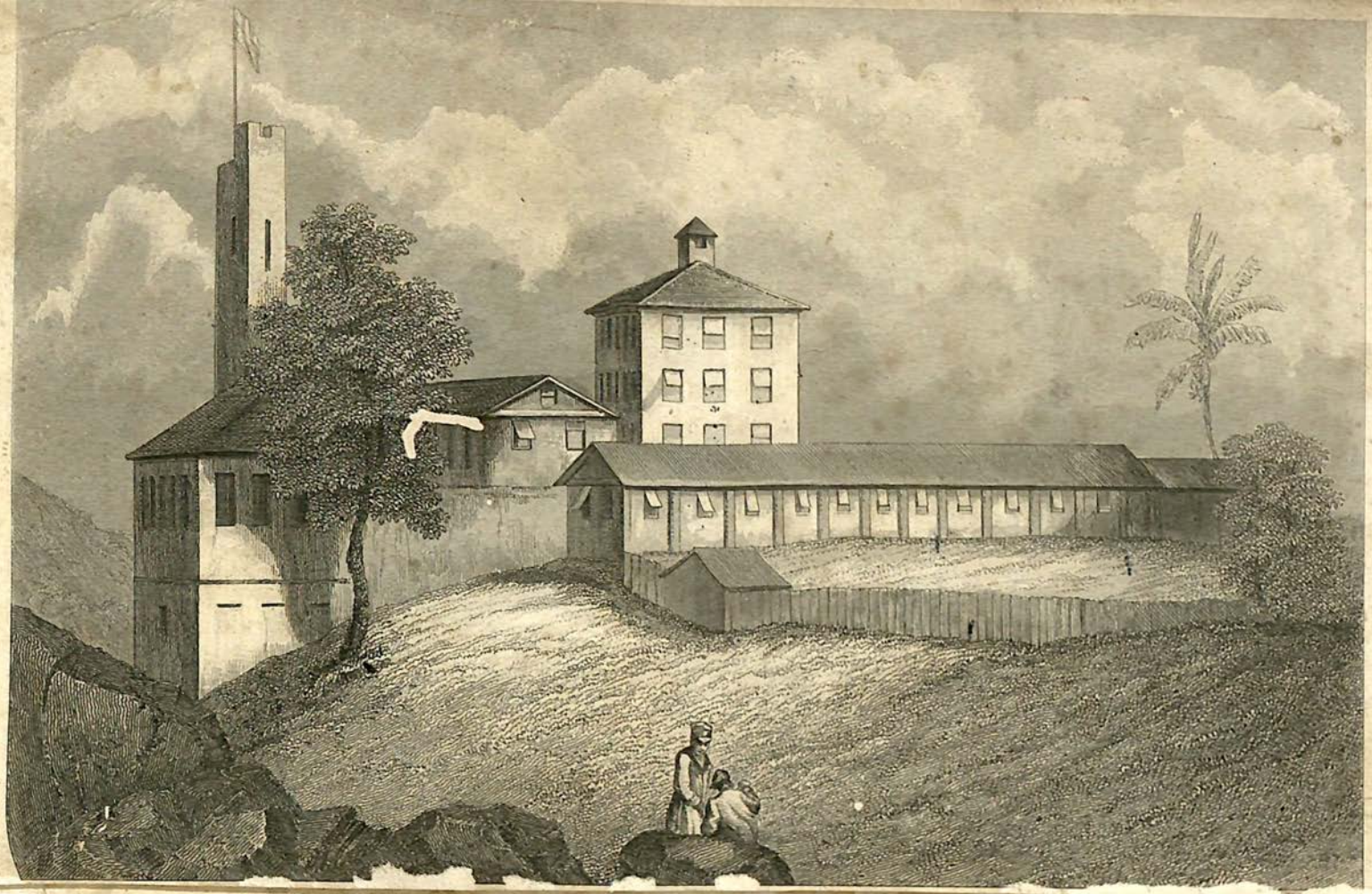

THE

HISTORY OF BRITISH GUIANA.

COMPRISING

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COLONY;

A NARRATIVE OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD OF ITS DISCOVERY TO THE PRESENT TIME;

TOGETHER WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF ITS CLIMATE, GEOLOGY, STAPLE PRODUCTS, AND NATURAL HISTORY.

32822

BY

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1855.

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DEDICATION

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY SIR HENRY BARKLY, K.C.B.

ETC. ETC.

In dedicating the following imperfect sketch of the history of a colony over which your Excellency has so ably presided for several years, I am actuated solely by the conviction that I could not have addressed myself to one who has a higher appreciation of the capabilities of the country, a more sincere interest in its progress and welfare, or a more thorough knowledge of its resources, than your Excellency.

It would be unbecoming in me to attempt to trace the vast amount of good your Excellency's administration has conferred on the colony, or the many benefits which have resulted from your statesmanlike and judicious measures. The good result may be traced in the impulse given to agriculture, in the steady if not flourishing condition of the commercial interests, and in the general advancement of our legal, political, and social institutions.

I may, however, be permitted to observe, that the administration of your Excellency has been fully appreciated by the intelligent and respectable classes of the community, who by a late testimonial presented to your Excellency have given a convincing proof of their sincerity. As regards myself, I feel that it is chiefly through your Excellency's encouragement and support I have been enabled to complete the present work; and, while I regret that it is not more worthy of your consideration, and of the subject of which it treats, I beg to inscribe it to your Excellency as an inadequate testimony of the gratitude and respect with which

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's

Most obedient, humble Servant,

HENRY G. DALTON.

PREFACE.

In submitting the following work to the notice of the public, and to that of my fellow-colonists in particular, I feel myself called upon to offer some explanation as to its appearance.

Shortly after my arrival in this colony in 1842—a colony in which I was deeply interested by the ties of birth and family connexions—I felt a great desire to become acquainted with the history of the country in which I was about to reside, and I naturally looked around for any work which would enlighten me on this subject.

To my surprise and regret, however, I found that no connected history of British Guiana had ever been published.

Interesting and numerous as were the facts connected with the rise and progress of the colony, and its general and natural history, no attempt to collect them had been made for many years. For want of such a record, the valuable discoveries of naturalists and travellers, the praiseworthy labours of Humboldt, the two Schomburgks, Hillhouse, Hancock, and others, were inaccessible and unavailing. A description of the colony sixty years ago, written in Dutch, a sketch by Bolingbroke

and Montgomery Martin, a short account by the Chevalier Schomburgk in 1840, with his Reports to the Royal Geographical Society, and a recent publication in German by his brother, constituted nearly all the information which had been gathered with regard to the colony.

Sir Robert Schomburgk had done more than any other individual in making us acquainted with the capabilities, resources, and natural productions of this country; but although he acquired for himself an honourable fame for his interesting and successful explorations of the interior of British Guiana, he did not, unfortunately for the public, devote his talents, knowledge, and industry to the completion of a work comprising a general account of the province in which he had spent so many years of his life.

Disappointed at not finding any authentic source from whence I could obtain the information I desired, I determined to seek it for myself, and for several years devoted as much leisure to the arduous task as the harassing nature of my professional pursuits would admit.

In the course of my researches I found that my materials had accumulated to such an extent as to interest others as well as myself, and at length I entertained the idea of arranging them in some definite shape, with a view to publication.

I make no pretension to write a complete history of this important colony—the attempt would be beyond my capability or opportunities—but simply to give a general sketch of the history of British Guiana from the earliest discovery and exploration to the present time, including the eventful periods of slavery, apprenticeship,

and emancipation, together with a description of the surface, and some notices of the natural history of the country.

In the prosecution of my undertaking I have encountered more labour and difficulty than I had anticipated; for although I was incidentally indebted to the preceding authors who had severally illustrated different branches of the subject, I yet found that I was entering upon, for the most part, a new and entangled field, where I had to seek much for myself.

Whatever information I have derived from others I have honestly acknowledged; for the rest I hold myself responsible, and bespeak indulgence.

"He who first undertakes to bring into form the scattered elements of any subject, can only accomplish his task imperfectly; but the attempt has its value if it is based on a right principle." I have made the attempt, and it will be for the reader to decide upon the result. If I have succeeded in producing a work calculated to interest, amuse, or instruct, and to excite attention to the invaluable resources and vast capabilities of this magnificent province, I shall be amply repaid for the toil, anxiety, and care I have expended upon its production.

With respect to the chapters on the natural history of the colony, it is proper I should say that I do not aspire to be able to treat such a variety of subjects with the scientific accuracy they demand. The information I have collected has been derived exclusively from my own researches and personal observation, without being able to command any of those collateral aids which such inquiries, above all others; stand most in need of. These circum-

stances will, I hope, extenuate any imperfections which may be found in this part of the work. In compiling it, I have derived much important information from a work lately published by Herr Richard Schomburgk in German,* which gives a comprehensive and scientific account of the Fauna and Flora of British Guiana.

To those who have kindly assisted me in procuring information, to his Excellency Governor Barkly, to the members of the Combined Court, and to others who have encouraged me in this laborious undertaking, I tender my grateful acknowledgments.

Finally, I trust that the defects of the writer may not be permitted to prejudice the object he has had in view, which is to rescue a valuable colony from neglect, and to attract towards it the notice and consideration its history and resources will be found amply to repay.

* "Reisen in British Guiana."

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THE

HISTORY OF BRITISH GUIANA.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

DESCRIPTION OF BRITISH GUIANA—ITS EXTENT—ALLUVIAL LAND—SAND DISTRICTS—MOUNTAINS—THE SAVANNAHS—THE FORESTS—DESCRIPTION OF THE RIVERS: THE RIVER DEMERARA, THE ESSEQUEBO, THE CORENTYN, THE BERBICE, THE WARINA, THE BARIMA, THE POMEROON—CATARACTS—NATURAL CURIOSITIES: ATARAIPU ROCK, PURÉ-PIAPA, MARA-ETSHIBA, GRANITE PILES, COMUTI-ROCK, PICTURE-WRITING OR TEHMEHRI, ROCK CRYSTALS, AGATE, GOLD REGIONS, PRECIOUS STONES—RETROSPECT.

THE History of a Nation may be compared to the life of an individual—it has its birth, infancy, maturity, and decline; and as there are few lives which do not present some points of interest and instruction, so from the various phases of a nation may be gathered many curious points for speculation and inquiry. This observation may be said to be inapplicable to the rise and progress of a mere colony; but, after all, what is a colony but a nation in its youth? The mind of man, having no traditions to fall back upon, and being bound to the past by no transmitted usages, forms, or institutions, must carve out its own destiny by such means as circumstances have placed within its reach. The History of a Colony traces the course of this curious and instructive process.

It has been said,* that in the decline of a nation commerce flourishes, and becomes the prevailing occupation. This does not obtain with regard to a colony. Commerce here may be said to give rise to its origin. It is certain, that whatever may be the means of acquiring or establishing a possession, the motives generally may be traced to the desire of gain or glory. What else induced the followers of Columbus, or Cortes, to leave their then over-populated countries, and struggle for territory and riches with the inhabitants of a newly-discovered world? What else could have tempted the bold adventurers on the ocean from all nations, to barter for, and purchase, cargoes of human beings in order to hurry their degraded victims to a life of slavery? or persuaded the inhabitants of England to quit their native soil, and in the immensity of Eastern possessions to contend for conquest or death? It is, perhaps, well that it is so; all things work to a good purpose, and the individual who is prompted by necessity to seek other scenes for his talents and industry, involuntarily contributes his mite towards relieving his country from the evils of a too thickly populated soil, and at the same time assists in the diffusion of population over countries where fruitful nature pines for the help of industry and skill.

These considerations lead us directly to our subject. But before we enter upon an examination of the races that originally peopled the surface of Guiana, or the colonisers that gradually settled amongst them, it is desirable to lay before the reader a description of the country itself.

Guiana, Guayana, or Guianna, consists of a large tract of country in the southern continent of America, whose natural boundaries seem to be the river Orinoco, and its branches on the west and north-west; the Atlantic Ocean

* Bacon's Essays.

on the north-east and east; and the mighty river Amazon, with its tributary streams, on the south and south-west. This extensive territory is largely encircled and intersected by rivers which flow in almost uninterrupted communication throughout the land.* The South-American Indian, seated in his buoyant boat, the stripped bark of some forest tree, might have entered the broad mouth of the Amazon, and wending his solitary way along the southern boundary, have entered the broad tributary stream of the river Negro, and ascending its waters along the western outline of this tract of country, persevered through the natural canal of Cassiquiare and the southern branches of the Orinoco until he reached that river; and here his course would be unbroken to the wide waters of the Atlantic, a few degrees higher to the north than where he commenced his voyage.

According to modern geographers,† the extensive country of Guiana lies between 8 deg. 40 min. north latitude and 3 deg. 30 min. south latitude, and between the 50th and 68th deg. of longitude west of Greenwich. Its greatest extent between Cape North and the confluence of the river Xie with the river Negro is 1090 geographical miles; its greatest breadth between Punta Barima, at the mouth of the Orinoco to the confluence of the river Negro with the Amazon, is 710 geographical miles. A line of sea-coast extends between the river Orinoco and the Amazon, and is now divided into the Venezuelan or Spanish, the British, the Dutch, the French, and the Brazilian or Portuguese Guianas; but their respective and definite inland limits have never been satisfactorily arranged. That portion of this fertile but wild country (for by the Dutch it was called Guiana, or the Wild Coast) to which we must chiefly limit our-

* This statement, however, is not intended to justify the ignorance of many persons in England who speak and write of British Guiana as an island.

† Schomburgk.

selves—the present British Guiana—is generally considered as extending from the mouth of the river Corentyn in 56 deg. 58 min. west longitude, to Punta Barima in 60 deg. 6 min. west longitude, and comprising an area of 100,000 square miles in extent.

According to a modern writer on the subject,* who has been the principal traveller in this country, "if we follow the limits which nature prescribes by its rivers and mountains, and include all the regions which are drained by the streams which fall into the river Essequebo within the British territory, and adopting the river Corentyn as its eastern boundary, then British Guiana would consist of 76,000 square miles." But according to the Brazilians, who have lately claimed as far north as the mouth of the river Siparumes, its area would be reduced to about 12,000 square miles; and it would form the smallest of the Guianas which are possessed by Europeans, as indeed stated on French authority.†

Assuming, however, that it covers an area of nearly 100,000 square miles, the districts of Demerara and Essequebo may be computed at 70,000 square miles, while those in Berbice may be estimated at 25,000 square miles. But only a small portion of this extensive tract is colonised and in a state of cultivation.

Before the arrival of the European, the lofty mountain heights of the interior, the fertile and undulating valleys of the hilly region, and the borders of the illimitable forests and savannahs, were alone tenanted by the various tribes of Indians who were scattered throughout this vast domain. Their fragile canoes were occasionally seen gliding along the large rivers and the numerous tributary streams which intersect the country; a dense mass of unrivalled foliage, comprising palms, mangroves, cou-

* Schomburgk.

† Dictionnaire Geographique Universel, Paris, 1828, vol. iv. p. 615, where the area of British Guiana is stated to consist only of 3120 leagues.

ridas, and ferns, fringed the banks of the rivers and the margins of the coasts, while a thicker bush of an infinite variety of trees extended inland over an uncleared territory, where the prowling beast, the dreaded reptile, the wild bird, and the noxious insect, roamed at large; but when colonisation commenced and civilisation progressed, the flat lands bordering on the coasts and rivers were cleared and cultivated; the savage forests and their occupants retreated before the encroaching step of civilisation and the march of industry; plantations were laid out, canals and trenches dug, roads formed, and houses raised over the level plain of alluvial soil, which, without a hill or elevation of any kind, stretches for many miles between the sand-hill regions and the Atlantic Ocean.

British Guiana, estimated as containing 100,000 square miles, lies between 1 deg. and 8 deg. 40 min. north latitude, and between 57 deg. and 61 deg. west longitude, with a sea-coast line of about 200 miles in extent, running in an oblique course from east to west, and stretching along part of the alluvial main formed by the deltas of the rivers Amazon and Orinoco. This line of coast is intersected at various distances by several large rivers, namely, the Essequebo, the Demerara, the Berbice, and the Corentyn, which latter separates British from Dutch Guiana; but besides these large rivers, there are several smaller streams, such as the Barima, the Warina, the Morocco, the Pomeroon, the Mahaica, the Mahaiconi, the Abari, &c., which, although tolerably large, have been improperly called creeks when compared with the larger streams.

The course of these rivers is from south to north—their origin difficult to trace in the wild and mountainous interior—and their mouths opening into the vast Atlantic. Their discoloured waters dye the waves of the ocean for many miles to seaward. On approaching the land from

the north and north-east, the blue waters of the Atlantic begin to be tinged with a dirty green at least 100 miles off the land, by degrees assuming a yellowish tinge until about forty or fifty miles off the coast, when a marked line of yellow may be seen, carried by a powerful current towards the Orinoco, after passing which the traveller enters the shallow, turbid, yellow waters, which announce the close proximity of the flat but fertile shores of Guiana.

The whole line of coast is skirted by mud-flats and sand-banks, especially about the Demerara and Essequebo. The mud-flats extend seaward about twelve miles, and render the approach of large vessels impracticable, unless in the hands of pilots and others acquainted with the coast. The approach to the rivers is along a narrow channel, for numerous shoals exist which render it difficult even for schooners and other small craft to navigate. Large sand-banks also stretch out along the coasts, but as these will be more particularly noticed in reference to the rivers whose navigation they obstruct, I will add nothing further than that the true limits of many have not accurately been defined, although buoys and beacons are placed on several. Besides these, a quantity of drift mud and sand is frequently shifting about and interfering with the drainage on the coasts.

The first indication of land is characterised by a long, irregular outline of thick bush, on approaching which, groups of elevated trees, chiefly palms, with occasionally an isolated silk-cotton, or the tall chimneys of the sugar plantations, with the smoke curling upwards, begin rapidly to be recognised, and indicate to the experienced trader almost the very spot he has made. On nearing the land the range of plantations may be easily marked by the line of chimneys; the dense foliage of the coast partly intercepts the view of any buildings, the low ground being covered with mangroves (Rhizophora

Mangle) and courida bushes (Avicennia Nitida), ferns, and other plants, but behind this wooded barrier numerous dwelling-houses, extensive villages, and the sugar manufactories, extend along the belt of land which, in an unbroken level, constitutes the cultivated districts of the colony.

Once in sight of the land the scene rapidly changes in appearance—from a long, low outline of bush to the different objects which characterise the attractive scenery of the tropics. The bright green palm-trees, with their huge leaves, fanned briskly by the sea-breeze, and the lofty silk-cotton-tree (Bombax Ceiba) are plainly visible, while a confused but picturesque group of trees and plants of tropical growth, with white and shining houses interspersed among them, present to the stranger rather the appearance of a large garden than the site of an extensive and busy city. Before the river Demerara is fairly entered, the course steered is towards the light-ship, situated about twelve miles from Georgetown. This beacon is a floating vessel at the entrance of the difficult navigation of the river. In fine weather, and during the daytime, it may readily be seen with the naked eye, and at night a bright fixed light indicates to the navigator the anxious object of his search.

Pilots are procured at the light-ship, and conduct the numerous vessels which arrive into the river, whose locality is clearly indicated by the tall masts of ships, which, like forest trees stripped of their foliage, peer distinctly above the houses and other edifices of the city.

The light-house and fort are soon recognised, and very often, in little more than an hour after gazing with anxiety upon an unbroken mass of water, the traveller, as if by magic, is ushered through a crowd of ships and small vessels into a busy town, with its motley inhabitants collected from almost every part of the globe.

The geological structure of the inhabited districts, or

of the land on the banks of the rivers and along the sea-coasts between the mouths of the rivers, is entirely alluvial. The soil is covered with perennial foliage, nourished by the frequent rains and balmy atmosphere of the tropics. The rapid rivers in their course carry down from the far interior the detritus of mouldering mountains and decrepid forests. The crumbling rocks of the interior, mingled with vegetable matter, formed at one time the only burden which these waters bore to the sea; but this was no mean freight. By degrees, deposit on deposit, formed at the deltas of the several streams stretching also along the coasts, produced at last an alluvial soil, which has not its equal in the world, save perhaps the overflooded plains of the Nile. The soil, so simple and yet so productive, has been the formation of centuries; huge rocks have crumbled to give it existence, mighty forests have contributed to sustain it; the streams that bore it to its resting-place have had their waters dyed by its circulation, as if to leave an imperishable memento of its singular formation; and for miles around these rivers carry to the blue ocean their stained waters, to arrest the adventurous traveller who, exploring the wide Atlantic, seeks for a new country that is worthy of his industry.

This alluvial tract extends inland to variable distances, from ten to forty miles, and, consisting of different kinds of clay, impregnated with salt and decayed vegetable matter, rests at varying depths of 50 to 200 feet on a granitic bed. It is almost level throughout its whole extent, a gentle descent of about one foot in many hundred roods being scarcely perceptible.

The depth of soil varies in different places, but, as a general rule, may be considered as greatest towards the borders of the coasts and river-banks, diminishing more or less regularly as it extends inland. The maximum depth may be considered about 200 feet, as on the east

coasts. The minimum depth about 50 feet. The greater part, if not the whole, of this fertile alluvion has been under water, but has been gradually recovered from the sea and rivers by natural as well as artificial means.

The natural means which have contributed to reclaim portions of land from the overflooding waters are the gradual accumulation of soil, occasioned by the deposition of the tides and the drifting of small particles of earth towards the deltas of the rivers. Slowly and by degrees did the work of superimposition proceed, until in some places a natural barrier was opposed to the inroads of the waves, unless on extraordinary occasions, as during the prevalence of high winds and spring tides, where miles of land became temporarily flooded by the swollen waters.

From a consideration of its composition (which will be shortly noticed), it has been thought by some that these alluvial shores have increased to their present extent by the deposition of earthy matter brought down by the rivers, together with decaying and decayed vegetable matter, &c., so that in time the deposit of mud has been sufficient to throw back the sea, and emerge from obscurity, to become of use to mankind.

Another authority has, however, rather boldly conceived "that some years ago this continent was habitable fifty feet below the present surface, and that it was then covered with an immense forest of courida-trees, which was destroyed by conflagration, as appears by the ochrous substratum. The sea must, at that time, have been confined to the blue water, where there is now eight or nine fathoms; and whatever may have been the comparative level between the Pacific and Atlantic on this side of the Isthmus of Darien, the surface must have been then fifty feet lower than now." It would be useless to speculate upon what we cannot easily prove. Either theory accounts partially for the fact that a large

portion of this country was originally under water; but Mr. Hillhouse is wrong in conceiving that, because strata of decayed wood composed a portion of the soil, it implied the land to have been habitable. One circumstance in the chemical composition of the soils on the coasts and those on the banks of the rivers—viz., the existence of large quantities of saline substances in the former, and comparatively little in the latter—would lead us to believe, that however true it may be that some portion of the coasts has been under the sea, yet that the waters of the ocean have not very recently covered the alluvion of the rivers.

The artificial means made use of by the inhabitants of the country to keep off the encroachments of the sea and rivers consisted in the embankments or dams thrown up during the formation of estates. Owing to the natural level of the cultivated districts being lower than that of the sea and river at high water of spring tides,* it became of importance both for safety and for the purposes of agriculture that such means should be as effectual as possible; but even at the present day these means are scarcely found sufficient to protect either the town or country. The dams raised are often insufficient in structure, and barely high enough to resist the march of the watery elements.

The alluvial soil, in general, consists of stiff clay, varying in colour, and in the quantity of organic and inorganic matters they contain. Some of these clays are blue in colour, contain much organic matter, and are in general singularly fertile; others, again, are yellow, and are not so productive; while in many places the soil is covered over at different depths with layers of a substance called "Pegass," a black, light mould, composed of vege-

* In some places it is as much as four or five feet below the level of high water—as on the east coast; but up the rivers the difference is less, and higher up, altogether disappears.

table detritus, deposited at the mouths of the rivers. This peculiar substance, made up of decomposing vegetable fibre, and regarded by some as a kind of peat, is injurious to the productiveness of the soil.

The analysis made of those soils have been of two kinds: textural, or mechanical, and chemical.

By the former method, chiefly ascertained through the diligent exertions of our scientific agricultural chemist, Dr. Shier, the alluvial clay is found to consist of argillaceous or impalpable matter, and portions of sand of different degrees of coarseness, besides organic matter and soluble substances. Thus, in round numbers, out of 100 parts of soil, about fifty per cent. may be estimated as argillaceous or clayey, forty-three per cent. as sandy matter, two per cent. soluble saline matter, and the rest organic matter and adherent moisture, as better illustrated by the annexed tables composed by that gentleman.

Little or no lime is ever found in the soil along the alluvial or maritime portion of land; indeed, its presence anywhere throughout the country has been denied by most persons. A scientific traveller, Dr. Hancock, affirmed that none of the soil along the rivers Essequebo, Orinoco, or Barima, could be made to effervesce with an acid; but in Schomburgk's account of the ascent of the river Corentyn in October, 1836,* he describes a calcareous clay† as occurring in the composition of the hills "Oreala," or Alivavarra.

The chemical composition of the different kinds of soil met with on the coasts, the banks of the rivers, and the interior, has been but little studied; of late, however, several portions of soil in the cultivated districts have been analysed by chemists both in Europe and in this country, and the results published. They present a few peculiarities which deserve consideration. The speci-

* Transactions of the Royal Geographical Society.
† A recent analysis, however, has demonstrated that it contains no lime.

mens examined have been found remarkably rich in organic matter (chiefly vegetable), which accounts for the singular fertility of the land in general; as much as ten and fifteen per cent. has been detected in some lands; generally five to ten.

This organic matter is little else than the thoroughly decomposed vegetable substances which have become incorporated with the inorganic bodies; the organic remains of animals form but a very trifling portion of its bulk. It may be regarded as a kind of natural manure to the rest of the soil, and is found in great abundance in all parts of the colony. Organic matter is found very plentifully in pegass lands, but, existing only in a partially decomposed state, is comparatively unfit for the growth of plants.

Another peculiarity of the soil is the large quantity of iron met with in its composition. This exists probably in the state of a protoxide, which towards the surface is often converted into a peroxide. Iron ore is therefore met with, combined with varying proportions of the oxygen of the atmosphere. It is not unlikely that phosphates of iron, combined with alumina, also exist. The soil in many places is quite discoloured from the abundance of iron it contains, and the waters flowing through it are impregnated largely with some of its salts. In some specimens of earth which I have myself analysed, I have found as much as five to ten per cent. of iron in some form or other.

The quantity of soluble saline substances met with in the soil varies greatly in different parts of the colony. The salts chiefly found are those of soda and potash. The former (common salt especially) abounds in many places, particularly in the neighbourhood of the sea-coasts. The old planters knew this practically, by observing that estates in this district were better adapted for cotton than sugar, coffee or plantains; and it was

only when the altered duties on the former threatened to ruin them, that they reluctantly abandoned the culture of cotton on these properties for that of sugar, &c. It was, however, reserved for our agricultural chemist, Dr. Shier, to demonstrate scientifically the influence that such an abundance of saline matter exerted upon the products raised from such soils, thus pointing imperatively to an altered system of drainage.

His attention was first directed to the subject by "observing that the water from the reservoir, in a thoroughly drained field at plantation La Penitence, was very perceptibly salt to the taste, even after it had been pumped out at least twelve times." He immediately instituted a series of interesting experiments on the waters of the colony, such as those in the Artesian wells, in the rivers, creeks, estuary, and sea, as well as others on the cane-juice and molasses raised from such lands, and published the result of his experiments in a short treatise on the subject of "Thorough Drainage," for which he greatly merits the thanks of the planters.

A more important fact has not been announced for many years in the colony, and as its practical value is at once apparent, I have inserted, with his permission, some of the tables, which illustrate this subject in a forcible manner.

From what has been already stated with regard to the probable submersion of a great part of our cultivated lands, it is not difficult to account for such large quantities of salt as have been met with, and the vicinity of the sea sufficiently accounts for the greater portion met with in coast lands.

Where the rich alluvial district terminates, a range of unproductive sand-hills and sand-ridges rises up, the former attaining a height varying from 30 to 120 feet. In some places, as on the coast of Essequebo, they

approach the sea within a few miles. If followed upwards from that point they take first a south-east by south, and afterwards a south-east direction, traversing the whole colony. About twenty-five miles up the river Demerara a number of these sand-hills are met with, their height varying from 100 to 150 feet.

The rest of the land is covered with trees and shrubs, constituting what is called "The Bush."

Behind several estates, along the west bank of the same river, sand-ridges are met with; and both in Essequebo and Berbice large tracts of sand are to be found.

Almost parallel with the ridge of sand-hills several detached groups of hillocks of moderate elevation are met with. They are seldom more than 200 feet high; they cross the river Essequebo at Osterbecke Point, in lat. 6 deg. 15 min. north; the Demerara, at Arobaya, in 6 deg. 5 min.; the Berbice, in 5 deg.*

The sand procurable from the various sand regions varies both in appearance and quality, and is much in demand in the colony for road-making, ballast, and other purposes. The white sand occurs both in the districts of Demerara and Essequebo.

From the sand-hills up the river Demerara a white sand is procured, which is useful for ordinary purposes; it contains much silex, is evidently well suited for glass-making, and may be obtained in any quantity.

Some time ago a specimen of white sand was sent to Boston in the United States, and on trial in the glass manufactories it was found superior to that in general use at that period. Specimens forwarded to Liverpool, and to the Great Exhibition of 1851, were much admired. I have myself remarked elevations of a fine white sand some distance up the Itaribice Creek, but have seen

* Schomburgk.

specimens far superior to this which were procured from some banks above the falls of the river Essequebo.

A species of black sand is found at the sand-hills up the river Demerara, specimens of which have been forwarded to Europe and America.

I have been informed that in some places a kind of mixed sand is met with, alternate layers of the white and dark variety being visible.

A common yellow sand forms banks and ridges in various parts of the colony. On the Arabian coast of Essequebo miles of road of loose sand are found, and beautiful sand beaches line many of the plantations which front the sea.

The term "caddy" is applied to fine comminuted shell, or fine sand intermixed with organic matter, and is much used as ballast for ships.

The mountains of British Guiana are far removed from the coasts, and are so difficult of access as to be rarely seen by the inhabitants. Beyond a few enterprising travellers, and the Indian tribes who live in their vicinity, they have been seldom visited, and from want of accurate information respecting them, the remarks which follow are necessarily scanty.*

At present considerably removed from the Atlantic, it is more than probable that formerly the waves of that ocean washed the bases of the numerous chains of primitive rocks which stretch across this part of the continent of South America in various degrees of latitude, and that these granitic formations acted as a sort of dyke or boundary to that vast body of water which has since receded to so great a distance from its former situation.

Evidences of such a retreat of the ocean may be

* For a further and better account of the numerous mountains and hills met with in the interior of this magnificent country, the reader is referred to Sir Robert Schomburgk's reports to the Royal Geographical Society.

gathered from a variety of sources; such as the presence of huge boulders of stone, found frequently in situations where the action alone of the water could account for their smooth and polished exterior; the indications of submersion furnished by large tracts of land now in cultivation, or occupied by forest trees; and the existence of numerous ridges of sand, which either as ranges of hillocks or in banks are so frequently found in various parts of the colony.

Between the 1st and 2nd parallels of north latitude, and between the 57th and 59th deg. of western longitude, are situated an irregular group of mountains, called the Ouangouwai, or Mountains of the Sun, close to the sources of both the Corentyn and Essequebo rivers. They may be regarded as offsets of the vast chain of the Sierra Acarai, and form a kind of connecting link between the Acarai and Carawaimi mountains.

The natives called this range the Wanguwai, the highest peak of which is estimated at 3000 feet above the plain. Its latitude is 1 deg. 49 min. north. From the river Caneruau, a small stream which joins the river Essequebo from the south-east, a view may be obtained of the chief range of the Sierra Acarai, stretching from north-east round southerly north-west, the outline peaked with sharp ridges, but densely covered with wood. Kaiawako is reputed the highest point, and is probably about 4000 feet high. This region is inhabited by the Woyawais Indians; they are of middle stature, and of a lighter colour than the Tarumas, who live a little further to the north. The former are great hunters, but are very dirty in their habits.

The Carawaimi mountains are situated between the 2nd and 3rd parallels of west latitude, and the 58th and 59th deg. west longitude. A range of hills runs towards them in a south-east direction. They are com-

posed of granite, and are well wooded, with a maximum height of about 2500 feet above the plain, descending to the river Guidaru, a tributary of the river Rupununi. The neighbourhood of these mountains is inhabited by the Wapisiana tribe of Indians, a fine-looking race of men, with regular features and large noses. Another tribe, the Atorais, are likewise found amid these mountain ranges, but little is known respecting their number or habits. It is in this group that the natural pyramid of Ataraipu is met, a description of which will be given when considering the natural curiosities of this romantic country.

In the same parallel of latitude north, but further west, or between the 60th and 61st deg. west longitude, and situated on the banks of the Uraquira, a few mountain groups are placed. Mount Caruma is made up of inclined plains of gneiss, having the appearance in some places of perpendicular walls, over which a streamlet forms a small cascade. From its heights the summits of the Mocajahi mountains are seen to the westward, looking like islands rising out of the ocean.

The Kai-Irita, or Kai-Iwa, or Mountains of the Moon, are situated between 59 and 60 deg. west longitude.

The Tinijau mountains are to the southward of the Caruma, or St. Grande.

The collective name of these detached groups is supposed to have been laid down in former maps as the Sierra Yauina.

Between the 3rd and 4th deg. of north latitude the Cannucu, or Conocon mountains are situated.

This range extends about thirty miles in a north-east and south-west direction, through which the river Rupununi has forced itself a passage. The stream here is about 130 yards wide, and occasionally the mountains rise abruptly to the height of from 2000 to 2500 feet.

The geological formation is primitive, or granitic.

They are well covered with wood; hence the term "Conocon," which, in the Brazilian language, signifies "wooded," in opposition to Pacaraima, which means bare. They are inhabited by a numerous tribe of Indians, called Warpeshanas, or Mapeshanas, as well as by the Macusis, a large and powerful nation. The Cannucu mountains connect the Pacaraima mountains with the Sierra Acarai, in which the Essequebo has its sources. Two points, Nappi and the Curassawaka, are distinguished by their perpendicular walls of granite. Nappi is the Macusi name of the sweet potato. The urari, or wourali plant, from which the famous poison is made, grows on the Cannucu mountains. It was found there in a glen in the months of January and June, 1836, but upon neither occasion was it in flower. The vegetation on these rocky masses consists of the myrtaceæ, clusiaceæ, and orchidaceæ, besides a vast number of plants belonging to other natural orders.

On the banks of the river Essequebo, between the 4th and 5th deg. of north latitude, various mountain ridges are situated.

The Twasinkie mountains, rising 1100 feet above the river on its western banks, extend in a westerly direction, while, three miles beyond, on the right or eastern bank, the Akaywanna mountains, about 900 feet high, stretch to the north-east, and again, about another three miles further off, but on the left or west bank, the Taquiarie, or Comuti mountains, attain an altitude of about 900 feet. "These two ranges, projecting into the river on either hand, cause it to assume the form of an S in its course for about six miles. In this distance are three falls, the most formidable of which, named Yucoorit, is caused by a dyke of stratified granite, or gneiss, crossing the river in a north and south direction, over which the water, hastened by previous rapids, and narrowed in by projecting rocks, precipitates itself with violence. The

surrounding mountains recede and form an amphitheatre, affording a highly picturesque scene."*

Between the same parallels of north latitude the Maccary mountains extend in a south-east direction. They are situated on the east or right bank of the river Essequebo, and are very abrupt and ragged, studded with whitish masses of rocks, often perpendicular, and sparely wooded. Latitude 4 deg. 27½ min. Four miles south of these mountains the rapids again commence, and continue for eight miles, a vast labyrinth of islands intermingling with the foaming waters.

On the opposite or west bank of the river extends a large and important range known as the Cassi mountains, which stretch southwards and become connected with the Pacaraima.

The mountains of Pacaraima approach the river Essequebo in lat. 4 deg. north, and appear to be an offset of the vast Sierra Parima range. Their general direction is east and west, and they are reputed to be of primitive formation. In the eastern part they attain a height of about 1500 feet, and have a westerly course of about 200 miles, forming the separation of waters of the basins of the Orinoko and the Essequebo on the north, and the Rio Branco, a tributary of the Amazons, on the south. At the eastern foot of the Sierra Pacaraima range a settlement called Annay† is placed. The geological structure of these mountains is chiefly granitic. The "Monosuballi," or Twins, are of flinty quartz, and occasionally much chalcedony is found. They are generally bare of wood; the soil at the foot of the mountains is good. The savannahs, on the contrary, are frequently bare of vegetation, with here and there groups of stunted trees, and in other places only covered with short grass. Several

* Report of an Expedition into the Interior of British Guiana in 1835-6. By R. H. Schomburgk, Esq., Corresponding Member R.G.S.

† Annay, in the Macusi language, signifies maize, which is said to grow wild here.

tribes of Indians are located amid these undulating heights, but are widely scattered and few in number; the chief of these are the Wacawais and the Arecumas, whose lonely and isolated position but rarely give the opportunity of intercourse with the more civilised part of the community.

Connected with the main range of the Pacaraima mountains is situated Mount Mairari. It is between the 60th and 61st deg. west longitude. It is a stupendous mass of granitic and gneiss, the lower parts alone being wooded. It is famed for a beautiful species of parokeet (Psitticaria Solstitialis). Its height has been computed at 3400 feet above the sea. Other mountain ranges are situated very near. Thus Mount Zabang is found near to the river Cotinga, or Xuruma, which is connected with the river Tacutu, but neither of these two last ranges can be considered as fairly existing within the precincts of British Guiana.

Between the 5th and 6th parallels of north latitude various important groups of mountains are placed. They are composed of granite, gneiss, and trappean rock, with their various modifications. They traverse Guiana in a south-eastern direction, and, according to Sir R. Schomburgk, may be considered as the central ridge of the colony. They have been considered as an offset of the Orinoco mountains, with which they are connected by the Sierra Ussipama of geographers. "Whenever this chain crosses any of the rivers which have been under my investigation, it forms large cataracts—viz., those of Twasinki and Ouropocari in the Essequebo, Itabrou and the Christmas cataracts in the river Berbice, and the great cataracts in the river Corentyn. The highest peak appears to be the mountains of St. George at the Mazaruni, the Twasinki and Maccary on the Essequebo (the latter rising about 1100 feet above the river), and the

mountains of Itabrou on the Berbice, the highest of which, according to my barometrical admeasurement, was 662 feet above the river, and 828 above the sea. This chain appears to be connected with the Sierra Acarai, by the Marowini mountains, and I am inclined to consider it the old boundary of the Atlantic, the geological features of the chain conducing to such a supposition."*

The culminating point of this range is the famous Roraima mountains, about three and a half miles long, but of inconsiderable breadth. From its eastern side flows the river Cotinga, which mingles its waters with those of the Takutu, Branco, and Negro, and ultimately falls into the Amazon.

Roraima is the name given by the Indians (signifying "red rock") to the highest point of a range of sandstone mountains, in latitude 5 deg. 9 min. 30 sec. north, longitude 60 deg. 47 min. west.

"This remarkable mountain group extends twenty-five miles in a north-west and south-east direction, and rises to 5000 feet above the table-land, or 7500 feet above the sea, the upper 1500 feet presenting a mural precipice, more striking than I have ever seen elsewhere. These stupendous walls are as perpendicular as if erected with the plumb-line; nevertheless, in some parts they are overhung with low shrubs, which, seen at a distance, give a dark hue to the reddish rock, and an appearance of being altered by the action of the atmosphere. Down the face of these mountains rush numerous cascades, which, falling from this enormous height, flow in different directions to form the tributaries of three of the largest rivers in South America—namely, the Amazon, the Orinoco, and the Essequebo.

"These mountains form the separation of waters of

* Schomburgk.

the basins of the Orinoco and Essequebo on the north, and the Amazon on the south; and they are, therefore, of the greatest importance in dividing the boundary of British Guiana."*

The waters collected in such abundance on the summit of these heights are supposed by Sir R. Schomburgk to be occasioned by condensation from cold, as the thermometer stood at midnight at 59 deg. Fahrenheit. He further remarks: "The geological character of this is sandstone, with grains of quartz and particles of decomposed feldspar." Romantic and poetical as are these sublimities of nature, they are duly appreciated by the Indians. Their traditions and songs bear constant allusion to this magnificent creation. In their dances they sing of "Roraima, the red-rocked, wrapped in clouds, the ever fertile source of streams;" and, in consequence of the darkness which frequently prevails when thick clouds hover about its summit, it is likewise called the night mountain; "of Roraima, the red-rocked, I sing, where with daybreak the night still prevails."

Several other mountains form with Roraima a sort of quadrilateral arrangement, of which Roraima is the highest point, and the most south-easterly in direction. This quadrangle, according to Sir Robert Schomburgk, "occupies, from south-east to north-west, ten geographical miles. The names of these mountains are Cukenam, Ayang-Catsibang, and Marima."

A rocky height named Irwarkarima is distant about two miles from Ayang-Catsibang. It is bold and rocky, and attains an elevation of about 3600 feet. It is remarkable for an urn-shaped rock on its eastern end, which is about 466 feet high, and at its widest part 381 feet. Next to this height are the Wayaca, Carauringlebuh, Yuruariuma, and Irutibuh, which conclude the group.

* Schomburgk.

Not far from Roraima is the mountain Kaimari, about 4000 feet above the level of the sea. Tracts of pure white clay or decomposed feldspar are met with in it, also a few blocks of compact feldspar of a bluish colour. White clay is, however, found in several other places, and might usefully be employed in the manufacture of ware. Red jasper, or hornstone, is frequently met with in the vicinity of Roraima.

Such are some of the principal mountain ranges of the colony, which divide it, as it were, from the vast plains and wooded lands of the western part of the continent.

Enclosed between these rocky regions and the waters of the Atlantic the rest of the face of the country is marked by a few, but grand features—such as widespread savannahs, illimitable forests, undulating plains, gigantic rivers, and the various natural curiosities which present themselves to the traveller.

The term "savannah" has been indiscriminately applied to a variety of grassy, marshy spots, which, however, differ widely from each other. The savannahs met with here may be reduced to about three or four different kinds, and the number of them met with throughout this colony is very remarkable.

The first variety which I shall notice are those which are met with between the rivers Demerara and Corentyn. These are in general large tracts of swampy land, some of which are covered with tall, rank grasses, the abode of reptiles and aquatic birds—such as the stork and rail, &c.; but others are well suited for grazing purposes. In some places they approach the sea-shore, as at the river Berbice, where miles of them occur.

Apparently similar to this kind of savannahs are those which are met with about the rivers and creeks; although not so large in extent, they are covered with a variety

of tall grasses, and afford places of resort to the wild duck, the bittern, rail, and other birds. Some of these savannahs, however, are far from being sterile; those which lie between Demerara and Berbice are admirably suited to the grazing of cattle, and are so used at the present day. Many of the cattle, however, stray, and in these extensive domains become absolutely wild.

A second variety of savannahs consists of those great tracts of marshy land which are encompassed, according to an intelligent traveller,* "by the Sierra Pacaraima to the north, the Cannucu, Taripona, and Carawaimi mountains to the south, the thick forests of the Essequebo and isolated mountains to the east, and the mountains of the Mocajahi, and offsets of the Sierra Parima, to the west."

They are about 14,400 square miles in extent, and have evidently been submerged at no very distant period. These great savannahs are traversed by tortuous streams, whose course may often be traced afar off by an irregular row of trees, which fringe the otherwise scarcely perceptible banks. The same authority informs us that these savannahs are merely covered with grasses and a few stunted trees, except in some places, where tufts of trees rise like verdant isles, or oases in a desert, from amidst these plains.

"This tract contains the lake Amucu, which in the dry season is of small extent, and overgrown with rushes; but during the rainy season it not only inundates the adjacent low countries, but its waters, as I have been assured by Indians, run partly eastward into the Rupununi, and partly westward into the Rio Branco. The small river Pirara has its sources somewhat south of Lake Amucu, flowing through it towards the Rio Mahu. On

* Sir Robert Schomburgk.

the banks of this small lake stands the Macusi village Pirara."

According to Sir Robert Schomburgk, "the geological structure of this region leaves but little doubt that it was once the bed of an inland lake, which by one of those catastrophes, of which even later times give us examples, broke its barrier, forcing for its waters a path to the Atlantic. May we not connect with the former existence of this inland sea the fable of the Lake Parima and the El Dorado? Thousands of years may have elapsed; generations may have been buried and returned to dust; nations who once wandered on its banks may be extinct, and even no more in name: still the tradition of the Lake Parima and the El Dorado survived these changes of time; transmitted from father to son, its fame was carried across the Atlantic, and kindled the romantic fire of the chivalric Raleigh." The vegetation of the districts about the river Rupununi, where this description of savannah is met with, is far from being luxuriant. It consists of arid sands upon a clay substratum, and is unproductive. Similar to this sterile kind of savannah is that met with behind many of the estates on the Arabice coast of Essequebo.

A third variety of savannah is peculiar to the inland portions of this continent, and, although hardly within the limits of British Guiana Proper, requires some notice here, especially as throwing some light on this misapplied word.

These tracts of land are of varying extent, but are marked by an entire absence of hills or irregularities of any kind; hence the term llanos, or plains, which have been applied to them by travellers and others.

According to Humboldt,* "the savannahs, improperly

* Cosmos.

called by some prairies, are true steppes (llanos and pampas of South America). They present a rich covering of verdure during the rainy season, but in the months of drought the earth assumes the appearance of a desert. The turf becomes reduced to powder, the earth gapes in huge cracks. The crocodiles and great serpents lie in a dormant state in the dried mud, until the return of rains and the rise of the waters in the great rivers, which, flooding the vast expanse of level surface, awake them from their slumbers. These appearances are often exhibited over an arid surface of fifty to sixty square leagues; everywhere, in short, where the savannah is not traversed by any of the great rivers."

This description of savannah has been, however, considered by others as the bed of an inland lake, which at some time or other has burst through its banks, and by degrees become gradually dried up. These sterile savannahs are the deserts of the American continent. The hardy grasses which abound are the resort of the serpent and the stork, and present, whether flooded or dried up, a cheerless aspect to the traveller.

Far different to the barren savannahs are the magnificent forests which present to the eye an unfading garment of green, varying in tint from the darkest to the lightest hue. Here are to be seen majestic trees, larger and statelier than the oak; here entwine in voluptuous negligence numerous pliant vines, interlacing and encircling the larger trees, and named by the colonists bush ropes. Here flourish the varieties of the broad-leaved palms, the numerous native fruit trees, and a host of others possessing medicinal and other valuable properties; whilst minute mosses, innumerable lichens, and a variety of ferns and parasitic plants crowd together in social luxuriance; orchideous plants in amazing numbers, perched on the gigantic and forked branches of trees, seeking only for a resting-place,

appear to inhale from the air alone (though so densely crowded by inhabitants) the pabulum which supports their capricious and singular existence.

The whole earth is life, the very air is life, and the foot of man can scarcely tread upon an inch of ground in this magazine of Nature's wonders without crushing some graceful plant or beauteous flower, so densely is it inhabited, so united, peaceful, and thriving are its denizens. The very beams of the bright sun are excluded from these secret haunts. Its rays glance only on the fanciful and glistening leaves which form a veil or mantle to the treasures they conceal. How true and beautiful again is the language of Humboldt, for not alone were trees, and shrubs, and plants glorying in existence; the forest, still and silent as the grave, seemed a city for the reception of all things living save man. "Yet amid this apparent silence, should one listen attentively, he hears a stifled sound, a continued murmur, a hum of insects that fill the lower strata of the air. Nothing is more adapted to excite in man a sentiment of the extent and power of organic life.

"Myriads of insects crawl on the ground, and flutter round the plants scorched by the sun's heat. A confused noise issues from every bush, from the decayed trunks of trees, the fissures of the rocks, and from the ground, which is undermined by lizards, millipedes, and blind worms. It is a voice proclaiming to us that all nature breathes, that under a thousand different forms life is diffused, in the cracked and dusty soil as in the bosom of the waters, and in the air that circulates around us."

Timber trees in every variety, fruit trees in astonishing profusion, medicinal plants of singular efficacy, shrubs and flower-plants in inexhaustible numbers, are found within these fruitful forests, in whose branches nestle a world of birds. The shrill scream of the parrot at morning and evening rends the air, while plaintive and slow

strains may be heard at times from the maam and the powie. The rich plumage of the numerous bird tribes, and their peculiar and varied notes, form a marked contrast to the mute but grand assemblage of living plants. The magnitude and grandeur of these vast forests are almost incredible, save to eye-witnesses. The Indian, the melancholy lord of the soil, alone appreciates their gorgeous beauty and soothing solitudes.

The magnificent rivers of the colony next demand attention; they are the connecting links between the inhabited civilised shores, and the lonely but romantic scenery of the interior.

The river Demerara* is about a mile and a half wide where it joins the Atlantic, and runs in a tortuous course, in a southerly direction, a distance of about 200 miles, and is lost in a small group of mountains which approach the Essequebo in 4 deg. 28 min. north latitude, and are called the Maccary. Its exact origin is not known, but it is said to arise from two small streams: one from the south-west, the other from the south-east, which unite to form this river. For about 100 miles up this stream is navigable for small vessels, and many brigs and barques have sailed nearly that distance to load with timber; the tide extends likewise so far; after that, a great number of rapids and cataracts impede the traveller's progress; and the Indians, in their slight canoes, can scarcely find a pathway. Some of these cataracts are very large, and difficult to overcome. The river receives but few and unimportant tributaries in its course; these are called creeks, and are first met with about two hours' tide; they flow with it on the right and left; some of them, narrow and shallow in their course, meander for many miles through marshy savannahs or wooded plains, occasionally expanding into

* This river was called Lemdrare by Raleigh and his followers; Rio De Mirara by the Spaniards; and Innemary, or Demerary, by the Dutch.

lakes, or shrivelled up into almost impassable beds of water. These creeks are almost abandoned by the natives; a few wood-cutting establishments, and scattered bands of squatters, fast sinking into barbarism, occupy their dreary borders.

As a marked contrast, however, the banks of the Demerara, for about thirty miles, are studded with thriving estates, dwelling-houses, and villages. The tall chimneys of the former, wreathed in smoke, stand like sentinels along the winding stream.

The further you proceed from Georgetown, which is situated on the eastern bank of the river at its embouchure, the traces of civilisation become less distinct, the river narrows considerably, and along its savage and uncleared borders bands of almost lawless Africans and creole negroes live in a state of primitive simplicity. The more honest and industrious have assembled in rude villages, and earn a livelihood by raising ground provisions and cutting wood.

Early in the morning hundreds of corials, deeply loaded with produce, charcoal or wood, may be seen gliding with the tide towards the Georgetown market, and returning in the evening with goods purchased in the city. The tiny and grotesque sails of many are now spread to catch the afternoon breeze, and quickly, if not often safely, the little fleet of boats are scattered over the river, dotting the stream in all directions.

The more ignorant or lazy of the squatters, however, employ themselves in stealing from the others, and, retiring to the secluded creeks or gloomy forests, lead an unprofitable life of savage barbarism.

Situated in the vicinity of larger rivers, the river Demerara loses that importance to which it is otherwise entitled. Its current is very powerful, especially towards its mouth, where it has been computed to flow as rapidly as seven or eight knots an hour, and the under-cur-

rents or eddies must be equally powerful, and act much in the manner of whirlpools, for it has become notorious, by experience, that few persons who have the misfortune to fall into its stream are saved: whether borne away and sucked under by the eddying wave, or devoured by the greedy sharks, which in hundreds abound at its mouth, it is difficult to determine; but the melancholy fact still obtains, and has rendered the mariner cautious and wary in his sports.

The colour of this remarkable river (the supposed origin of its name being De Mirar, or the Wonderful) is of a dirty yellow, being in fact occasioned by the clayey soil or mud which (having been washed down by its rapid waters, and rendering turbid and thick the otherwise pure current of the stream) is deposited at its mouth in banks or deposits of mud-flats, forming natural barriers at the entrance of the stream to any very large vessels.

A bar (as it is here called) of mud "extends about four miles to seaward, with only nine feet of water at half-flood, but the channel along the eastern shore has nineteen feet of water at high tide."* The very beach at its mouth is composed of mud; occasionally large quantities of sand or caddy† drift towards the land, and form temporary beaches, but shortly disappear, and are carried higher up the coast, to return again at varying periods; it should be stated that sand-hills from 100 to 150 feet high, and nearly perpendicular, are met with about thirty miles from the mouth of the river. Numerous islands of variable size obstruct, but not materially, the navigation of the river; the first of any importance, about twenty miles up, was named Borselen, and was afterwards made the head-quarters of the Dutch, and the capital of this settlement.

* Schomburgk.

† The term caddy is applied to a substance composed of comminuted shells, sand, and soil; but chiefly the former.

The river Essequebo, the largest in British Guiana, was called by the Indians "Aranauma;" by Hakluyt, "Devoritia, or Dessekeber;" and is supposed to have received its present name from one of the officers of Diego Columbus—D. Juan Essequibel. Deriving its origin in the Acarai mountains, forty-one miles north of the equator, it pursues a tortuous course for about 600 miles, and discharges its black, but pellucid, waters by four separate channels into the Atlantic Ocean. At its embouchure, or mouth, it is about twenty miles broad. The four channels alluded to are formed by three large islands, which stand crowned with perennial foliage, like monarchs on the frontiers of this watery realm.

These islands became afterwards cultivated, and are now known as—1st. Tiger, or Arowabische Island, about ten miles long, on which three estates have long been in cultivation. 2nd. Leguan* (the most eastern island) is about twelve miles long. In 1770 it had eight or nine coffee estates, and was subsequently laid out in sugar estates. 3rd. Waakenaam,† or Margarita Island, is about fifteen miles long, and had in 1770 about three sugar and four coffee estates.

Most of the estates on the island of Leguan have been partially, some wholly, abandoned; a few, however, are still in active and successful cultivation. In 1829 the sugar crop from about twenty estates was 10,905,911lbs.; while in 1849 it had decreased to 2,504,215lbs.

In Waakenaam, there were formerly twenty estates in active operation; some of these have since failed, but there are still many large and valuable properties. The sugar crop has decreased about 6,000,000lbs. within the last twenty years.

* Leguan derives its name from El Guano, in consequence of the prevalence of guanos—a species of lizard.

† Waakenaam signifies in want of a name.

Numerous other islands in luxuriant beauty are also negligently strewed throughout its course,* some large, some small, all lovely, and said to equal in number the days of the year. In its serpentine course the river Essequebo traverses valleys of surpassing richness and mountains of great height, which, rising from 3000 to 4000 feet above its banks, cast their fearful shadows over its waves. The sombre forests approach in some places to the very water's edge, and the granite rock, with the mouldering forest trees, sink down together beneath its current. The dark colour of the water has been the surprise of every visitor. Regarded at a distance, it looks absolutely black and opaque, but a nearer approach reveals its translucency and bronze-like tinge. It has been supposed by a scientific colonist† that this tint is derived from the iron of the granite rocks, as the waters are as dark at their source as at their termination; but another authority‡ (and with more reason) attributes the stain to the impregnation of carbonaceous or decayed vegetable matter, and remarks, that where any of its branches traverse a different kind of soil to alluvrum, as, for instance, a savannah, the colour becomes lighter.

Possibly the two causes assigned, acting together, produce this curious result. Be this as it may, the river Essequebo has other equally singular features. Flowing generally from south to north, it receives a host of tributary streams. Thousands of little rivulets descending from mountain steeps, and meandering along verdant plains and through rocky passes, combine to form the mighty branches which pour their strength into the parent stream. Many of these streamlets are derived from sources not far from the origin or bed of the

* The names of many of these are characteristic; thus the largest are known as Hog, Fort, Lowlow, and Troolie Islands.

† Mr. Hillhouse. ‡ Hancock, p. 40.

great Orinoco. In their course the tributaries of the Essequebo sweep over ledges of rocks of varying magnitude, forming cascades of every size, from the simple rapids to the gigantic cataract. "Some of these falls are most difficult of ascent; the Caboory, for instance, is full thirty feet high, in four different ledges, and requiring one hour's hard labour to get over a space of about 100 yards. The rapids do not run in one sheet over a level ledge, but force themselves through a number of large intermediate blocks of granite, dividing the differents hoots of the fall."* The noise of some of the larger cataracts is heard at a distance of several miles. The principal rivers, which like veins flow into one common trunk, are the Cuyuni and Mazaruni, whose united streams, about a mile in width, reach the Essequebo about thirty miles from its mouth; the Potaro, or Black River, from the south-west; the Siparuni, or Red River, also from the south-west; the Rupununi, or White River, a large stream about 220 miles long; the Cuyuwini, the Yuawauri, or Cassi Kityon, from the south-west; and the Camoa, or Owangou, also from south-west; and the Wapuau and Caneruau from the south-east. It would be needless in this place to enter into a description of the different ramifications of these streams, or to dwell upon the innumerable rapids or cataracts which in many places actually obstruct all progress, especially in the Mazaruni.

The consideration of the numerous wooded islands, with their fascinating scenery, of the luxuriant specimens of vegetation, and of the animals and mineral productions, is left to the future scientific explorer, or enterprising naturalist. The curious on this subject may peruse with advantage the information gathered by such travellers as Schomburgk, Hillhouse, Hancock, and Waterton. Fort Island, called by Hartsink Vlag-

* Schomburgk.

gen Island, is situated at its northerly point about three miles from the sea. It formerly possessed a wooden fort, protected with a palisade work (horenwerk), built near a creek, named Schipper Jans Kreek, but this was destroyed, and in 1740 upon the same spot a stone fort was erected, which in 1743 was finished, and called Fort Zelandia. It was quadrangular, with four bulwarks around mounting eighteen or nineteen guns; inside was a triangular redoubt with a flat roof and embrasures serving as a casern for the soldiers and powder magazine. On the waterside was placed a "horenwerk" with palisades, and protected with twelve cannon. Towards building this fort, each plantation had to contribute so many slaves, but when complete, an agreement was entered into between the company and the planters, whereby the former undertook to maintain it without further aid from the latter. The planters also, for their protection, built a battery, which was armed by the company with four metal culverines, and forty swords, and was manned by the people given by the planters. It proved, however, of very little use, and soon was given up.

In 1746 one Rypersberg travelled very far up the Mazaruni, and states that upon the seventh day of his journey, he met with a high pyramid of hewn stone between very high mountains. He felt curious to visit it, but none of the Indians would accompany him, because they said it was the dwelling-place of Sawahou (Devil). The sea of Parima was the supposed El Dorado, and said to be inhabited by Indians of a fair complexion, and who wore clothes. In 1755 several successive attempts were made by the Spaniards to reach it, but failed, owing to the opposition shown by Indian and other dangers; four of these clothed Indians were taken prisoners, and were said to have been seen by many persons of veracity.

The governor of Essequebo, in 1756, sent thither to procure some of these people, but failed. Post Arinda was the furthest post of the Dutch, on an island close to the falls. The river is here very wide, and studded with islands. In this neighbourhood was a kind of metal like lead, so soft that it could be cut; higher up, and near the river Sibaroua were found mines of crystal; and still higher up, a volcanic mountain, said to have been discovered in 1749. On the banks of the Essequebo there were formerly about sixty estates, near the mouth of the river. The land is low and marshy here, but further in is high and mountainous.

Previously to quitting this account of our earliest historical river, it is to be observed that the entrance to the many wonders it includes is much obstructed by numerous shoals and sand-banks, which, stretching out to seaward, become sources of danger to unwary navigators.

The sugar-bank stretching three miles seaward from the mouth of the Essequebo, is so called from the wrecks in former years of small boats laden with sugar. Formerly the West India Company of the Chambers of Zealand, who managed Essequebo and Demerara, placed a Brandwagt, or guard-house, on the east bank of the river, with two cannons to announce the approach of ships. Vessels of considerable size, however, having found a safe channel, can proceed for about fifty miles up the river, where the commencement of the rapids terminates at once the tide and the progress of a ship. The banks of the river are remarkable for the number of trees and plants which bathe their sunny leaves in the refreshing stream. Within sight, if not within easy reach, arise lofty hills, their summits often hid in clouds, in wandering to which wild-fowl and game in many places abound, while the river itself furnishes numerous kinds of fish. There are

no estates to be seen at present on the borders of this noble stream; its lovely banks are only tenanted by a few impoverished individuals. For many miles no human habitation is visible; the very Indian has deserted the Lower Essequebo; the inevitable bush creeps down to the river's edge; the jabbering monkey, or the startled bird, occasionally breaks the deep silence of the scene; but scarcely an evidence of man's existence is to be traced around. A solitary schooner on its way to the penal settlement, situated on the tributary stream of the Mazaruni, may now and then appear, drifting lazily with the noiseless tide, or an Indian canoe from the quiet missionary settlement at Bartika Point, may be observed stealing silently along the sides of the stream to avoid the objectionable current.

The river Corentyn, or Courantin, separates the British possessions in Guiana from those of the Dutch. It has its origin about the 1st deg. north latitude, and is supposed to rise from the same mountain range as the river Essequebo, at a distance of about twenty-five miles east from the source of that river.

Flowing from the mountains of the sun (Ouanguwai) in a northerly direction, it is impeded in its course between the 4th and 5th parallel of north latitude by the same tract of granitic boulders which cross the rivers Essequebo and Berbice, and which forms a series of formidable cataracts in 4 deg. 20 min., described in another place. The river which had expanded at these rapids now contracts and runs north and north-east until it reaches 5 deg. north latitude, where it flows to the west for about forty miles and receives a large tributary, the river Cabalaba, from the south; further on it is crossed by a range of sandstone rocks, and receives the river Matappe; its course is now to the northwards, and is so tortuous, that in one instance—namely, from the

mouth of the river Paruru to the river Maipuri (small tributaries which flow into it from the westward), it describes almost a circle, the distance by the river being twenty miles, while across the savannah, which here follows its course, it is only one and three-quarter miles. Further on it receives the rivers Wasiappe on the right, and Oreala on the left; the cliffs about Oreala consist of horizontal beds of siliceous conglomerate with sandstone, grains of quartz, and calcareous schistose clay of a bluish colour, and occasionally beds of loose sand and shale; these cliffs stretch north and south; they contain no organic remains; behind them stretch extensive savannahs; opposite to Oreala is Semira, the site of an old Moravian mission, and now consisting of an impoverished settlement. From Oreala the river flows in a northerly course, through a level country, for about fifty miles, and, receiving the tributary river Nickeri on its right bank close to the sea-coast, discharges its turbid waters into the Atlantic. At the mouth of the Nickeri is the Dutch settlement of the same name, with a small garrison and a sea-battery. Opposite to Nickeri, on the British side, was formerly the plantation Mary's Hope; three miles to the northward of this plantation, or in latitude 6 deg. 5 min. north, a soft mud-flat, called the Bar of the River, extends in a direction south-east by east to the distance of seven and a half miles, with a depth of seven and a half feet of water over it at low tide; the mouth of the river, estimated between Mary's Hope and Nickeri, is about ten miles wide; but between Gordon's Point and Plantation Allness, which by some are considered as the extreme points of the mouth of the Corentyn, the distance is eighteen miles.

A sand-bank is situated at the entrance of the river, which is about one mile long from north to south, and about half a mile in breadth, and forms two channels for

vessels to enter; the windward, or eastern, channel is the deepest; it has eight and a half feet water at low water; but at spring tides rises eight and a half feet higher, and at neap three feet; this channel is about two miles wide; while the westerly, or leeward, is shallower, but about the same width. The current of the river is very strong in the wet season, generally from three to four knots an hour, but sets fortunately in the direction of the river. The river Corentyn is navigable as far as the river Cabalaba, for boats that do not draw more than seven feet water, the distance being about 150 miles from the sea, if measured along the windings of the stream. In its course numerous sand-banks and islands are met with; thus in 5 deg. 55 min. north latitude it forms an estuary with navigable channels between the sand and mud-banks.

The river Berbice has its origin probably about the 3rd parallel of north latitude, flowing at first in a north-west direction through a swampy country intersected by offshoots of the Cannucu mountains, which give rise to the formation of innumerable rapids and occasional cascades. In 3 deg. 55 min. north latitude it has assumed the extreme limits of its westerly course, and approaches within about nine miles of the river Essequebo. There is an old path overland to this river across a fertile soil abounding in palm-trees, as well as the crabwood (Carapa Guianensis), the souari (Caryocar tuber-culosum), the yaruri, the amara, bignonia, and other trees; occasional swamps have to be traversed in following the narrow pathway which leads from one river to the other. The Berbice from hence takes a northerly course, and becomes very narrow and tortuous; now contracting to a width of only ten yards, in other places spreading out into lake-like expansions. The banks are low and marshy, and are not unfrequently under water. The stream now

flows in varying width through a wild and savage wilderness, its banks fringed by the prickly pear, and its current impeded by dense masses of a species of solanum, which is found in abundance. It pursues its winding course to 4 deg. 20 min. north latitude, when boulders of granite rock stud the river, which has previously received a small tributary, called the Black River, from the west. After passing the boulders, numerous cataracts and rapids obstruct the navigation for about fifty miles. The river before had been narrow, studded with islets, and fed by numerous inlets, with palm-trees on its banks, and had traversed a fertile soil impregnated with a chalky marl. It is now crossed by offshoots of the mountain chains already described. In this romantic region the famous Victoria Regia lily was discovered in 1836 by Sir Robert Schomburgk.*

In its rapid and tortuous course the river forms the Christmas Cataract; a series of rapids succeed, and further north it rushes from its northerly bank over a dyke of rocks, giving rise to the Itabru Cataract. The stream now expands into lake-like basins, at other times narrowing, and becomes almost hidden as it flows between the numerous rocks and hills which overhang its banks. The last cataract is in 4 deg. 50 min. north latitude, and after passing the rapids called Marlissae, the river is now free for ordinary boat navigation. In 4 deg. 55 min. north latitude the influence of the tide commences, and the distance from here is about 165 miles to the sea, if the course of the river is followed. A little before reaching this spot the stream becomes less tortuous, and is about eighty yards broad; on its banks are ledges of granitic rocks, of a red colour, with a smooth surface, and coated over with a thick crust of the black oxide of manganese. On these rocks there are

* Ascent of the river Berbice, 1836-7. Transactions of the Royal Geographical Society.

traces of picture-writing, called Tehmehri by the natives, somewhat similar to those found at Warapoota, on the river Essequebo, and other places. From the 5th parallel north latitude the course of the river is in a north-eastern direction to its outflow into the Atlantic. A small brook, the Yariki, flows into it shortly after it has taken this curve; the river now becomes shallow, with numerous inlets, and the last traces of the trappean rocks are met with, distant about seventy miles in a direct line from the sea. From its western bank a path is shortly reached which leads to the river Demerara, while on the eastern side, a little lower down the stream, a similar path conducts to the river Corentyn. The tributary stream of the Yuacari now enters the river from the westward, and if this brook is followed a two days' journey along its banks and one overland, will likewise lead the traveller to the river Demerara. The river next flows through a sandy district, some of the hills of which are 100 feet in height, from the summit of which a fine undulating and wooded landscape may be seen. The stream after this again becomes narrow and tortuous, numerous inlets, called Itabu, occur, and patches of coarse long grass (Panicum) and Mocco-Mocco (Caladium arborescens) obstruct its course. The Monbacca, a small tributary, joins the river on its eastern side, and lower down, the river Moracco enters it on the opposite direction, where there is a wood-cutting establishment in active operation. Another small stream, the Kabiribirie, famous for the coldness of its waters, and the Paripi, likewise join the river. At the junction of the latter several sand-hills or reefs extend close to the western bank. About ten miles further north, the river Wickie flows into it from the east, behind which extends a marshy district. Sand-hills now succeed, and the valuable wallaba-tree (Eperua Falcata) is found plentifully here.

The sandy region extends as far as Peereboom (behind which large savannahs stretch inland), but does not terminate here, for having received the tributary Wieronie in 5 deg. 42 min. north latitude, the former site of an old redoubt and church, and the small river Moshieba and the brook Kaderbicie lower down, the river flows through hillocks of sand termed Hitia by the natives, and narrowed at this point in its course, emerges from the last trace of rising or elevated land. These hillocks are fifty feet in height, and are distant about thirty miles in a direct line from the coast. In 5 deg. 50 min. north latitude it makes a sweep to the north-west, at the southern angle of which is the site of old Fort Nassau, forty-five miles from the mouth of the river along its windings; lower down, the river receives the rivulet Abari-Itabu, which connects it with the river Abari, and beyond this two smaller streams from the north-west, the former situation of Plantation Daagerad. In 6 deg. north latitude the stream is about a mile in width, and makes a considerable bend, remarkable for the strength of the bore, which occasionally rises from twelve to fifteen feet, and proves dangerous to the inexperienced.

After this it is only about half a mile wide, until it approaches New Amsterdam, which is situated a little above the junction of the river Canje, which flows into the Berbice from the east. A short distance from the embouchure of the river a low and bushy island, about a mile in circumference, called Crab Island, is placed in the centre of the stream, and divides it into two navigable channels, of which the eastern is the deepest, being from seventeen to twenty feet at high water. On the eastern bank of the river, opposite Crab Island, are the ruins of old Fort St. Andrew, which formerly mounted eighteen twelve-pounders, and was admirably placed both for offence and defence.

The river Waini, or Guainia, is a small stream, which, rising about the 7th parallel of north latitude, flows for its first half in a north-east, and subsequently in a north-west, direction, anastomosing with several other rivers in its course until it empties itself into the ocean. Shallows and sand-banks block up the entrance here of large vessels, but as it has a navigable channel of twelve to eighteen feet at high water, it may be navigated by schooners and other smaller craft.

A passage, known as the Mora Passage, connects it with the river Barima, which stream, rising in the neighbourhood of the Sierra Imataca, 7 deg. north latitude, flows to the north and west until it reaches the Orinoco close to the Atlantic. At its mouth it labours under similar disadvantages with the Waini; but if once entered, it offers an uninterrupted navigation to vessels of from 250 to 300 tons burthen as high as the junction of the Aruka. Towards the latter part of its course the soil is flat, marshy, and fertile, and covered with the inevitable courida and mangrove trees. By means of the Aruka and Aruan streams it becomes connected with the river Amacura, which, rising about the 8th parallel of north latitude, runs in a north and north-west course towards the Atlantic, where its waters are discharged a little to the westward of the river Barima. But the two rivers Barima and Amacura might be more readily brought into communication by cutting a canal across the portage. Numerous rivulets join the Barima on both its banks, which are, more or less, occupied by the Warraus, with a few families of Waikis.

The river Pomeroon rises about the 7th parallel of north latitude, and flows for about forty miles in a northerly course until it reaches the sea in 7 deg. 50 min. north latitude, and 59 deg. west longitude. The entrance

to the river is narrow, and bounded on the eastern side by a projecting tongue of land which is called Cape Nassau; the land here is low and woody, and numerous sand-banks extend seaward in front of it.

It was on the eastern side of this river that the first settlements of the Dutch were made in 1580; the sites of the two settlements of Nieu Middleburg and Nova Zelandia are to be seen marked on an old map of the country published in 1759 by Laurens Lodewyk Van Bercheyck. There were formerly many English and Dutch settlers on this river, and many flourishing plantations existed, traces of which remain to the present day. Block houses and stations for the troops were situated along part of the coast, which was not unfrequently visited by Spanish and other privateers in search of plunder. The sea is very rough about the entrance of the river, and the "rollers" or breakers render it at times somewhat dangerous. This river has water communication inland through its tributaries with the river Morocco, and by this latter with the rivers Waini and Barima, so that an inland navigation may be said to exist from the river Essequebo to the Orinoco.

Besides the above, there are the rivers Mahaica, Mahaicony, and Abari, which flow between the larger rivers of Demerara and Berbice. A number of smaller streams or creeks are likewise found, meandering for miles through the most varied landscapes, and opening to the ocean or into the larger streams.

The cataracts and rapids met with in the course of the noble rivers of this province are both numerous and interesting. They are occasioned by the rivers having forced their way through mountain ridges of primitive rocks, which traverse the country in irregular and undulating chains of varying height. At the narrowest part of most of the rivers they succeed each other rapidly; in

other places they are met at short distances from each other, but on the same line, at a part of the river where it has expanded into a kind of lake, and where huge boulders of rocks are strewn across the path of the torrent, as if intent on checking its further progress, but the impetuous stream dashes onwards, and, divided into several currents by the masses of rock in its way, constitutes in its flight and fall those numerous and picturesque cascades which now require our consideration.

However beautiful these are—however exciting to the wearied spirits of the traveller, they yet prove a difficult and sometimes dangerous impediment to his onward course. A few of these cataracts, and many of the rapids, may indeed be passed in the light corials of the Indian tribes, and with the assistance of their calm and skilful piloting, but, as a general rule, it is a dangerous experiment, and one that is rather to be avoided if possible than to be incurred.

In the river Demerara there is but one cataract which merits any notice; it has received the name of the great "Fall of the river Demerara," but is disparagingly spoken of by Robert Schomburgk, who visited it in March, 1837. I have been assured, however, by his Excellency Governor Barkly, who saw it in 1851, that it is a cataract of considerable importance; the height of the whole fall has been estimated at about sixty feet. It is situated about 300 miles from the mouth of the river.

The cataracts and rapids met with in following the course of the river Essequebo are both numerous and beautiful, and as several of the large tributary streams which flow into it are equally studded with these singular formations, it would be tedious to attempt to enter into anything like a formal account of them. To those who are desirous of becoming more acquainted with

them, the accounts furnished by Schomburgk,* Hill-house, and others, are recommended, unless they possess the leisure and inclination to visit these romantic spots themselves.

Independently of smaller rapids at and after its origin, the course of the Essequebo, after it has received the large tributary stream of Cuyuni in 2 deg. 16 min. north latitude, is, for the distance of about seventy miles, so impeded by cataracts, that it is barely navigable for the small canoes of the natives. It forms, in 3 deg. 15 min. north latitude, a large cataract called William the Fourth's Cataract. Its longitude is 57 deg. 19 min. 54 sec. west. "The river here is narrowed in by mountains to about fifty yards, and precipitates itself with great force over two ledges of rock about twenty-four feet high."

Before the river Rupununi (which has a course of about 229 miles) joins the Essequebo in 4 deg. north latitude, it forms a large cataract in 2 deg. 39 min. This, the largest cataract of the Rupununi, is called by the Wapisianas the Cutatarua, or Truan, and by the Caribs the Corona, signifying respectively "the fall."

After the junction of the Rupununi, another cataract, the Orotoko, obstructs the Essequebo, and further on the cataract of Waraputa appears, until, about fifty miles from its mouth, the last rapids are formed.

The river Berbice is obstructed in its course by a great number of cataracts and rapids. In some places they extend for upwards of a mile and a half in length. The Itabru cataract occurs in a spot where the river is encompassed by a range of hills from 200 to 600 feet high; the fall takes place in 4 deg. 49 min. north latitude, and 58 deg. west longitude. Huge blocks of

* Reports to Royal Geographical Society.

light green chert and decomposing claystone porphyry lie scattered at the sides of the cataract, while one boulder, larger than the rest, awaits at the foot of the fall the shock of the waters dashed against it. The Christmas Cataracts, so named by Sir R. Schomburgk on account of their having been seen upon that day, are situated in 40 deg. 42 min. north latitude, and 57 deg. 54 min. west longitude. They consist of a succession of falls, picturesque in their course, but difficult to surmount. Mr. Reiss, a young man of twenty-two years of age, who accompanied the expedition up this river, was drowned here on the 12th February, 1837. He ventured imprudently to descend one of these falls in a corial manned by Indians. In the rapidity of the descent he lost his balance, and, in endeavouring to recover himself, upset the frail bark. The Indians saved themselves, but the unfortunate European was carried away by the rapids, and his mangled body with difficulty recovered after a long search.

The cataracts met with in the course of the river Corentyn are exceedingly interesting, and are perhaps the largest in the colony. A chain of rocks crossing the river about the 4th parallel of north latitude gives rise to the following falls:

Sir James Carmichael Smyth's Cataract is situated in 4 deg. 21 min. north latitude, and 57 deg. 25 min. west longitude. It is called by the Indians Wanare-Wono-Tobo, and is probably the largest fall of water in British Guiana. The impetuous river rushes violently over a ledge of rocks to a depth of upwards of thirty perpendicular feet. A cloud of spray ascends from the foaming stream below, and adds considerably to the beauty of the scene, composed as it is of huge boulders of rocks, and a gorgeous mass of tropical trees on the river banks. A large boulder of rock separates this cataract from another cas-

cade, which, however, is only to be seen when the river is very full; this has received the name of Governor Barkly's Fall. A little higher up the stream, the body of water diverges in several channels, and at an angle of 60 deg. rushes into a beautiful valley formed by gigantic piles of rocks. The two cascades composing these falls are close together, and present a magnificent sight to the observer.

The greatest height of the next principal fall is, however, only twenty-five feet. It is known by the name of Sir John Barrow's Cataract, but the Indians term it Wotebo-Tobo, from the fact of a fancied resemblance of a particular rock to the human thigh-bone. The centre, or smaller fall has been termed the Middle Fall, and is separated from the others by large masses of rock. The four falls above enumerated cannot be seen at one and the same time. They require to be visited separately, but amply repay the toil and trouble of the traveller, who must force his way along the wooded banks, or encamp upon the projecting rocks or sand-banks, to examine them properly.

On the river Parámu, or Padamo, one of the streams which run into the river Orinôco, there are, perhaps, a greater number of cataracts and rapids than in any other river of British Guiana. Many of them are also of considerable size. One of these, the Mariwacaru, has a fall of thirty feet over a ledge of rocks. Again, where the river Kundanara joins the Paramu, two large cataracts are met with, which, from their size and the picturesque beauty of their situation, have been much expatiated on by travellers.

On the river Barama there is a succession of cataracts, with a fall of about 120 feet in a distance of two miles; but as the stream is very tortuous, they are not seen to

any great advantage. "The grandest sight is offered by the three upper falls, where the river, narrowing into about eighty feet, rushes turbulently down the precipice in three jets, and forms, in the distance of about 100 yards, a fall of thirty-five to forty feet perpendicular."* This part of the fall is called Dowocaima, and the scenery around it is exceedingly picturesque. The ledges of rock are composed of gneiss.

On the river Branco, or Parima, there is a very interesting fall of water, which has received the name of Purumama Iméru. It is formed apparently by the stream forcing its way through a chain of small hillocks, which cross it here. Its latitude is 3 deg. 20 min. north; its longitude 62 deg. 3 min. west. A first fall of about forty-five feet occurs, followed by another of about twenty-five feet.

The natural curiosities met with in the interior of British Guiana, among its mountains, its savannahs, and its magnificent rivers, are some of them very remarkable, and require a particular notice. From the period of its earliest discovery up to the present time, eloquent writers have expatiated on the striking scenes and objects which have presented themselves to their notice.

It is not in the neighbourhood of the coasts, or near the banks of the rivers (although even here the luxuriance of the foliage and breadth of water is very striking), that a stranger should judge of the country. He must pass by the maritime portion, and leave behind him the interminable forests; he must ascend the rivers, and surmount the numerous rapids and cataracts; he must quit the equable but enervating temperature of the low lands, and ascend the granite mountains and sandstone

* Report of Chevalier Schomburgk's Expedition up the Barima and Cuyuni Rivers in 1841.

heights, where the thermometer ranges from 59 deg. to 95 deg. Fah. in the shade, in order to appreciate the grandeur and beauty of the scenery; and to trace with awe, wonder, and admiration the picturesque objects which stud the wooded plains and wandering streams.

Description fails to record, with anything like truth, this magnificent scenery; but according to Sir Robert Schomburgk (whose splendid views alone can convey an idea of the country), the greatest geological wonder of Guiana is no doubt Ataraipu, or the Devil's Rock. This singular rock forms a kind of natural pyramid, and is situated on the western bank of the river Guidaru, in 2 deg. 55 min. north latitude. Its base is wooded for about 350 feet; from thence rises the mass of granite, devoid of all vegetation, in a pyramidical form for about 550 feet more; making its whole height about 900 feet above the river Guidaru,* and 1300 feet above the sea. According to the same author: "In latitude 3 deg. 59 min. north longitude, 59 deg. 28 min. west, a remarkable basaltic column, fashioned by Nature, and compared by the Indians to the trunk of a crownless tree, is called Puré-Piapa, or the 'Felled Tree,' and is of great interest. It occupies the summit of a small hillock at the outskirts of the Pacaraima mountains, and is about twenty-five miles north-north-west from the Macusi village of Pirara. This column, the regular form of which would cause any one who viewed it at some distance to suppose it to be the trunk of a decayed tree, is about fifty feet high." This is the smallest of a group of three masses of rocks of a basaltic nature which were met with by this intelligent traveller on a journey from Pirara to Esmeralda. Mara-Etshiba, the highest, terminates on the summit in one abrupt pillar, about fifty feet in height, a portion of which bulging out in the middle of this mass of rock, has, by the ever fruitful

* Guidaru signifies a kind of war club. This river is a tributary of the Essequebo.

imagination of the Indian, been assimilated to the Maroca—a large rattle made of the fruit of the calabash-tree, filled with pebbles, feathers, and snake teeth, and which is the indispensable instrument of the Piatrary, Piai-man, or Indian sorcerer, during his conjurations. Of this columnar group of trap-rocks, the largest has been named by the Macusis Canuyé-Piapa, or the guava-tree stump.

It is not to be wondered at that three such remarkable objects as the Mara-Etshiba, Canuyé, and Puré-Piapa have given rise to some tradition; the more so, since the Indian who inhabits the mountains is like other mountaineers, more vivid and fanciful in his imagination, and possessed of a larger stock of traditional history than he of the forest or of the plain. Consequently it is related, that when Makunaima, the good spirit, wandered still upon earth, he passed these savannahs, and, fatigued and thirsty, he observed a tree on the summit of a hill, which, in the hope of finding it covered with fruit, he cut with a stone axe. He was disappointed, and proceeded further eastward, and discovered the canuyé, or guava-tree, full of fruit; he cut it likewise, and after having refreshed himself he proceeded on his journey. It appears that whatever Makunaima touched was converted into stone, and thus the trees were changed into this substance. Every rock among these mountains, which is of more than ordinary size, or fantastically shaped by nature, is compared to some bird, animal, or tree, and is supposed to have been petrified by the powerful touch of the Makunaima. How similarly constituted after all is the mind of man, whether in his savage state or in his most civilised condition. The primitive speculations of the untutored inhabitant of this land approach in character the mythological traditions of ancient Rome.

"The sides of the Pourae-Piapa, or Puré-Piapa rock, are partially covered with red lichens, and in some places it is more acted on by the weather than in others. The

delusion being increased by a play of colours, the mind can scarcely divest itself of the belief that it is the gigantic trunk of a tree, the head of which, stricken by years, or shivered by lightning, lies mouldering at its foot."*

In the neighbourhood of the rivers fantastic piles of granite are met with; now soaring as columns nearly 200 feet high, now assuming the forms of familiar objects whose names they bear; thus, on the western bank of the Essequebo, two gigantic piles of granite rise from the declivity of a hill to a height of about 140 to 160 feet. One pile, called by the Arrawak Indians Comuti, and by the Caribs Taquiare, signifying in both languages Water-jar, consists of three huge blocks of bluish granite resting one above the other. The first boulder surpasses in size the celebrated pedestal on which the statue of Peter I. is placed; the second is supported on this by only three points, while on this rests another piece of granite, which resembles a jar in shape; and, to the fanciful imagination of the Indians, the resemblance was rendered complete by a fourth, but small piece of granite, which, occupying the summit, serves as a kind of lid to the jar. The other pile of granite alluded to is called Kamai by the Indians, from its resemblance to the tube, or strainer, which is used by them for expressing the juice of the cassada root before it is made into bread. It is of a pyramidal shape, and by the measurement of a neighbouring pile, which was 160 feet high, attains nearly to the height of 200 feet. These "giants of the hill," as Mr. Waterton has termed them in his "Wanderings," are both of them inaccessible.

It is in this neighbourhood that Sir R. Schomburgk and others have met with specimens of "picture-writing," or Tehmehri, the name given by the Indians to the rude and fanciful hieroglyphics carved on the rocks of granite in many places in the interior. The rocks on which

* Schomburgk.

these traces are found are singularly hard. With the sharpest instrument or stone it requires hours of hard work to produce even the slightest impression, and yet some of these figures and sketches are described as upwards of a foot in length, and more than an inch deep. Many of the rocks on which these hieroglyphics occur are at present decomposing; some have crumbled away, the figures destroyed; but on others the evidence remains of an untiring zeal and patient assiduity on the part of the Indian, which otherwise we should not have expected to find in his character.

In his illustrated views of British Guiana, Sir R. Schomburgk remarks, in reference to these rude sculpturings:

"A mystery, not yet solved, hangs over these sculptured rocks; whatever may be their origin, the subject is one of high interest, and demands the full investigation of the antiquarian and historian. I have myself traced these inscriptions through seven hundred miles of longitude, and five hundred of latitude, or scattered here and there over an extent of three hundred and fifty thousand square miles. I have copied many of them, and, although they do not denote an advanced state of civilisation, in my opinion they have a higher origin and signification than that generally ascribed to them; namely, the idle tracings of hunting nations. It is remarkable that the situation of those which I have seen was generally near cataracts and rapids. The Indian races of the present day can give no account of their origin; some ascribe them to the good spirit, others to their forefathers; and the Taruma Indians, on the river Cuyuwine, a tributary of the Upper Essequebo, gave me in answer to the question, who had made the figures which I saw sculptured on some blocks of green stone in that river, 'that women had made them long time ago!'"

The figures represented are of the most varied and singular description—rude outlines of birds, animals, men and women, and other natural objects; but it is not a little curious that among the sculpturings should be found some clumsy sketches of large vessels with masts, as was observed by the above writer, on some granite rocks at the Ilha de Pedra, on the river Negro.

In many places the hieroglyphics appear to represent writing, and the characters have in many instances been traced to bear resemblance to the Hebrew and other dialects; whether this is merely a coincidence, or whether there actually exists a connexion between the languages of the east and west, is a problem for the learned to solve.

On the river Cuowani there are found some granite rocks, on which are sculptured men's faces, full moons, monkeys, snakes, and birds.

My lamented friend, Dr. Bonyun, showed me, on his return from a tour up the river Essequebo, in 1850, a few copies which he had made of some of this picture-writing, which he found traced on granite boulders; and, on comparing them with the characters of the Hebrew alphabet, we were both surprised at the resemblance many of these hieroglyphics bore to the letters.

The only metallic trace throughout these heights has been that of iron; but as strata of quartz are known to intersect the bed of granite met with in different localities, it is possible that metallic veins of tin, copper, or lead, might be found in some of the numerous specimens of soft granite which abound. The general belief which formerly existed with regard to the existence of gold and silver in the mountainous interior, has almost entirely disappeared. It was formerly supposed that gold was to be found at Saxicalli, on the Essequebo; that copper existed in the river Cuyuni; and that at

Kaytan, on the last river, silver ore had been met with.* The Indians themselves afford us no ground for such a conjecture; the reports of modern travellers are unfavourable to their probable existence; and, although in the vicinity of regions formerly, if not now, abounding in the precious metals, as Mexico, Peru, &c., the hopes of the adventurous ended with the mining undertakings so zealously pursued at an early epoch of our history both by the Spaniards and Dutch. Many substances have at different times been mistaken for metallic ores; and the unskilled traveller is often struck with the delusive appearance of glittering veins which traverse the rocky masses, whether on land or water. Many beautiful specimens of the earthy minerals are, however, met with. Crystals of quartz (rock crystals) abound in the mountains; in colour and transparency they vary, but the white translucent kind is most common. A species examined by Hancock, crystallised into hexagonal columns, was met with by him either solitary or standing together, as if agglutinated; they are transparent, of a water-colour, taking a fine polish, and are nearly as hard as agate. So late as the year 1769 the Governor of Essequebo (Gravesande) sent one Gerrit Janssen, post-holder of Arinda, up the rivers Essequebo, Rupununi, and Maho, to seek for the much-talked-of crystal mines. On this last river he met with one of the native tribes, the Wapisianas, who some years before had murdered three Dutchmen. He was questioned by them as to his object in coming to their neighbourhood, and replied that it was to barter with them, and to make their friendship. He was accordingly introduced to one of their chiefs, who received him with great gravity, arranging his people around the stranger. The Dutch-

* In 1721, the Dutch made an attempt to search for silver on the Cuyuni: but the little ore discovered would not pay the expenses.

man recognised some friends among them, but the greater number were armed with bows and arrows. He made them a present of some gunpowder, which was thankfully received; and a kind of friendship having been established, he asked permission to continue his search, but was advised not to cross the river Maho, on account of the wicked character of the Indians there, who might murder him. He was told that there were six or seven hillocks of sand, and crystals in that neighbourhood; and the natives offered him specimens of each, but would not allow him to dig in the ground where they were found. These hillocks or columns were in a large savannah, where grass grew plentifully in some parts, and where the ground towards morning, in the dry weather, was covered with a kind of whitish powder, like hoar frost, which the Indians collected and used as salt. No doubt this was a kind of saltpetre (nitrate of potash). After a journey of about six months Janssen returned to the "post," bringing with him specimens of both crystal and saltpetre. Afterwards a mediator, or peace-maker (bulegger), was sent to that part of the country, who confirmed the statement about these crystal columns, and described them as about six in number.

A species of red agate is found in some of the rivers. Dr. Hancock met with it in the Rio Maow. It is very hard, and is capable of being worked.

A species of red rock, reputed cornelian, is found by the Indians at the western mountains of Parime.

In the neighbourhood of the Roraima mountains numerous rock crystals have been found; they are much weathered from exposure, and are only met with of small size. The natives (the Arecunas) say that formerly much larger specimens were met with, but that the Portuguese have carried them all away. These crystal mountains have given rise to much conjecture on the part of tra-

vellers. It is supposed that their existence was first made known to Europeans by the travels of Nicolas Hortsman, 1740.

Since the above was written, gold has been discovered in the river Yuruari, a tributary of the river Cuyuni, and in the Pacaraima mountains, situate between the 4th deg. and 5th deg. north latitude, and 50 deg. and 60 deg. west longitude. This region is, I believe, beyond the defined limits of British Guiana, and is very difficult of access. Some of the gold sent to Georgetown was of a very pure quality, and has been forwarded to the Industrial Exhibition of Dublin. It is found imbedded in masses of quartz, and will probably, at some future day, become of importance to the country of its discovery.

It is here, also, in the neighbourhood of Roraima, that traces are met with of extinct volcanoes. A writer in 1811* states: "The bed of the river, in the dry season, discovers vast quantities of vitrified, stony, and various mineral substances, and appears to have been the seat of volcanic fires at remote periods of time. These volcanic products are chiefly met with among the falls incumbent on beds of granite, where the soil and lighter materials have been washed away."

Many of the stones, or pebbles, which though quite absent near the coasts and alluvial land are yet found in the interior, are of singular colour and formation, being remarkably smooth, and admitting of a wonderful polish; some of these, from their colour and lustre, have been called diamonds—such as the Marowini pebbles—others, such as the cornelian, are used by the natives in forming articles of earthenware. In connexion with the evidences of a volcanic trace in the interior, travellers have been told that a tradition still exists among the Indians to the truth of that supposition; and even at the present day

* Dr. Hancock.

the old native, when expatiating on the wonders of the land which has been wrested from him, points his shrivelled finger to unexplored regions, where, as he asserts, the fire still burns. It was affirmed by an old writer, that a volcano in active existence was discovered in 1749, but others have failed to find it. Sir R. Schomburgk was told by the Indians of Pirara, "that on the south-western angle of the Sierra Pacaraima there was a mountain whence from time to time detonations are heard." Whatever may be the case in the inland districts, earthquakes are more or less frequent in this country; no injury has, however, ever resulted from a severe "Tremblement de Terre," as the French significantly express it. Of late the shocks, although slight, have become more common, and scarcely a year elapses without some motion being experienced.

It would be idle to attempt a description of the many magnificent and curious flowers abounding in the woods, and decorating the waters of this primitive territory. On the lofty mountains, and in the quiet valleys, in the fertile plains and the grassy marshes, an immense garden, stored with infinite variety, is presented to the observer. Raised and cultivated alone by nature, thousands of plants, the most rich and rare, spring up, blossom, and die. Many of them, however, have been reclaimed by enterprising naturalists, and have been transplanted to delight the senses of a refined community. The time may yet come when the foot of civilisation shall tread a path to these gorgeous regions, and the hand of man shall pluck these lovely plants from the obscurity in which they are now buried.

From these outlines some estimate may be formed of the natural wonders of this country. The little that has been seen has struck all beholders with astonishment and admiration. There may be monotony and sameness in the wonderful extent of its perpetual forests, where the

jaguar, the deer, and troops of monkeys dwell; but to the lover of nature and of science there is rich reward. There may be difficulty and danger to encounter in its far-stretching savannahs and granite mountains, but to an enterprising spirit there is both interest and honour to be derived by gathering and recording his triumph over the cayman and the serpent. Patience and endurance may be required to trace its numerous streams, and their verdant banks hung with garlands of flowers to the water's edge, but to the poet and the naturalist they are inspiring themes. Industry and perseverance are no doubt required by the man who desires to avail himself of the singularly fertile tract of alluvial land which has passed through so varied a course of agriculture and cultivation, but ample treasures await the individual who possesses such qualities.

CHAPTER I.

THE ABORIGINES OF BRITISH GUIANA—TRADITIONS—PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION—ORIGIN OF WORD "BUCKS"—DRESS AND ORNAMENTS—THE FIVE PRINCIPAL TRIBES: 1. THE ARRAWAKS; 2. THE ACCAWAIS; 3. THE WARROWS; 4. THE MACUSIS; 5. THE CARIBS — PROBABLE ORIENTAL ORIGIN — VARIETY OF LANGUAGES—INDIAN VOCABULARY—WEAPONS AND HUNTING INSTRUMENTS—MODE OF LIVING—ARCHITECTURE OF HUTS—INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN AND DESCENT OF THE NATIVES—FEELINGS OF REVENGE—GOVERNMENT—BAPTISMS—BURIALS—MARRIAGES—CONJURORS, OR PRIESTS—RELIGION.

HAVING given some account of the land whose history we are now to trace, the next subject for consideration is,—Who were the races by whom it was originally populated? It would be an unprofitable inquiry to investigate all the fanciful theories which have been promulgated at different times with regard to the origin and history of the various tribes met with in British Guiana. The probability is, that they had one common origin, and that the contrasts now existing amongst them may have been insensibly produced by local and accidental circumstances.

The inhabitant of this soil, before the discovery of America, was a stranger to the rest of mankind; he was hardly less isolated in an historical point of view. For him the voice of tradition was silent, or incoherent. Upon the surface of the earth there was no monument of man's fabrication to mark the grandeur or barbarity,

the happiness or misery, of his progenitors; there was no vestige of a higher, or of a more debased state of existence. The evidence revealed by nature, furnished proofs of centuries having elapsed in bringing about the physical changes already noticed; but the tongue of man was mute as to his own career. No record, or memorial of glory, or adventure, survived to transmit the examples of the past, and stimulate the emulation of the future. With these people the life of to-day follows the dreary track of ages of oblivion, and is utterly destitute of energy and excitement. Such seems to have been the unvaried course of generation after generation. The fulfilment of an instinct, the gratification of a passion, summed up the sluggish round of existence. Like the animals which for centuries had trodden the soil, feeding and dying, so the untutored child of this land grew on to manhood, and was returned to the dust without leaving any inheritance but the instincts of his kind.

After an intercourse of 300 years with the white man, the modes and habits of the native have undergone little or no change. With the exception of the efforts of a few zealous missionaries, no attempt has been made to civilise and improve him;* while the intrusion of Europeans into the territories which once belonged to his forefathers, rapidly threatens to extinguish the last remnants of his race. Sinking under impoverished resources and declining power, the fate of the unhappy Indian of British Guiana will, perhaps, in a few years, be as gloomy as that of his North American brother.

The complexion of the native is of a reddish-brown colour, and somewhat glossy, not unlike new and clean copper. He is short in stature, generally from five feet

* According to the evidence of an old inhabitant on this subject, the hauling or cutting of timber *on a Sunday*, was the only attempt at christianisation within his knowledge.

to five and a half feet high; but is fleshy, and well-formed. The women are somewhat less in size than the men; the head is disproportionately large, and the hair black, long, coarse, and straight; the features are regular but insipid, the eyes black but listless, and somewhat obliquely placed in their orbits. Their expression is unsettled and roving; the mouth is small, with full lips; the teeth good, except when injured by habits peculiar to some of the tribes; no beard grows, nor is allowed to grow, upon the face or body; the character suggested by the countenance is that of languor and apathy—a vacant placidity, unmarked by strong emotions; the limbs are round, and well-proportioned, but not muscular; the legs and arms disproportionately short, the trunk being rather long, the wrists and ankles are remarkably small, especially in the women, who often wear bandages in order to compress them.

In the large head, deep trunk, and short limbs, they approach the Mongolian race, and are apparently descendants of that branch of the human family. Their hands and limbs generally bear no indication of a life of toil or muscular exertion, although it is well known that their activity and powers of endurance are remarkable. Their voices are in general soft, low, and musical; they are chary of speech, and reluctant to enter into conversation; significant, and often graceful gestures, serve to convey their meaning better than words. They are distinguished by a singular calmness and self-possession, the type of indifference and listlessness. The females are shy, modest, and retiring; their figures when young are not unfrequently graceful, but after child-bearing, or when advanced in years, they acquire a coarseness and flabbid obesity which is repulsive.

The age of puberty is earlier in British Guiana than in cold climates; but, as a natural sequence, the evi-

dences of old age are soon apparent, and the bloom of youthful beauty is transient and fleeting. The men possess a strange air of independence and dignity in their walk and bearing, which, so far from being traceable to vanity or imitation, is perfectly natural to them. The Buck,* as he is here called, is unmoved by the most startling and novel sights. A smile or frown is scarcely ever seen upon his tranquil countenance, which reflects the impenetrable apathy of his mind. Grave and austere as the Arab, so felicitously described by the illustrious Gibbon, his speech and gestures are slow and solemn.

Like the savages of other nations, he goes about almost naked; a string is passed round the waist to sustain a fold of some vegetable texture, which is slung across the loins. Many of the women wear a fancifully-worked diminutive apron, called a "Queu," made either of beads or shells; in fact, a substitute for a fig-leaf. The bodies of the different tribes are marked by patches of paint, or tattooed streaks, which, in their own eyes, sufficiently distinguish them. They wear few ornaments: a necklace of some bright seed, or burnished tooth or shell; an earring of metal or stone; a coronet of brilliant feathers, gathered from the beautiful plumage of the gaudiest birds, are almost all the appendages to their persons. Of late years there has been a marked advance in their costume, which, with the men, consists of shirt and trousers, and with the women, of gowns and petticoats. This remark, however, applies only to those who have been brought within the pale of civilisation. The children are quite naked, and, as infants, are carried on

* The term Buck is probably derived from the Dutch word "Bok," which was the appellation used by that nation to designate the aboriginal of this land. It is easy to understand the slight alteration from "Bok" to "Buck," and again as to the Dutch term Bok. Doctor Hostman, in his work on the "Civilisation of the Negro Race in America," page 330, says that the origin of the Dutch word "Bok" is to be found in the word *Lokko*, which, in the Arrawaks language, means "*Man.*"

the hip or back. The women occupy the position of domestic slaves, attending to the drudgeries of house and field, while the men rove about hunting, fishing, or shooting with bows and arrows. Polygamy is more or less common, and depends chiefly upon the wealth of the individual, who generally keeps as many wives as his circumstances enable him to support. This practice gives rise here, as elsewhere, to most of the evils consequent upon such an unnatural social state.

Partaking of the same general character, there is, however, a marked difference among these people as regards habits, language, and moral, as well as physical, qualities of the native tribes met with in British Guiana; five only are sufficiently known to merit any particular notice:—1st, the Arrawaks; 2nd, Accawai; 3rd, the Warrows; 4th, the Macusis; 5th, the Carabisee.

1st. The Arrawaks, Arawaaks, or Arowack Indians, in consequence of inhabiting the region of the sea-coasts and mouths of the rivers, became earliest known to the European settlers. Possessed of pleasing, affectionate, and not very warlike qualities, they mingled freely with their invaders, who, disappointed in the hope of making them bondsmen, were not unwilling to secure their friendship and alliance. In physical conformation they may be taken as the type of the whole race, being short in stature and reddish in colour. In their manners the Arrawaks are perhaps less barbarous than the other tribes, and on that account have been much esteemed both by the Dutch and English.

According to the reports of persons who have resided among them, the numerous families of which this tribe is composed all descend in the female line, so that when a woman marries she continues to bear the name she received from her mother, which she transmits to her daughters, who, as well as her sons, are prohi-

bited from intermarrying with individuals of the same name.

They speak of God as Wacinaci (our Father), Wamuretti Kwonei (our Maker), and Aiomum Kondi (the Dweller on High). They also believe in a wicked spirit, whom they designate Yauhahu.

The Arrawaks are seldom more than five feet four inches in height, and are stout and plump in proportion, but not muscular; their necks are short, and their ankles, hands, and feet, particularly those of the women, remarkably small. Their features are in general diminutive, and the expression of the countenance has by some been considered melancholy and demure. They have, however, been termed the "tiger-men," in consequence of the aptitude and skill they display in overcoming the jaguar of the forests and coasts. They possess well-marked imitative powers, and when instruction has been bestowed upon them they have not been found wanting in intellect. The forehead is lower than that of Europeans, but it has been remarked by those engaged in teaching them, that in the children who have been instructed* the forehead rises considerably with the progress of education. They are not in general so dark in colour as many of the other tribes; indeed, some of them are asserted† to be very fair when not exposed much to the influence of the sun and atmosphere. Like most of the native tribes, they have characteristic marks by which they distinguish themselves, but none so obvious as to attract the attention of strangers. Their number has been estimated at about 1500 souls, said to consist of twenty-seven families or castes.‡ They generally tattoo their bodies in preference to dyeing them after the manner of the Caribs, whose peculiarities, however, they imitate in the structure of their huts.

* Bernan's Missionary Labours. † Hancock. ‡ Montgomery Martin.

2nd. The Wacawoios, Accawais, or Accaways, externally resemble the Arrawaks; their skins are of a deeper red. They generally stain their bodies red or blue, according to taste. They are said to be recognised by a large lump of arnotto (a species of red dye) stuck upon their hair over their foreheads, with which they paint themselves, partly to excite terror, and as a defence against the bites of insects, while the women adopt it as a species of ornament. This peculiarity is claimed also for the Carabisci Indians, whose language is allied to theirs, and who are marked on the forehead by the same colour.

The Accawais reside more inland, and generally occupy the upper rivers of the Demerara and Mazaruni. They are of a nomade, warlike nature, and wandering from the Orinoco to the Amazon, engage in barter or battle with other tribes according to circumstances. As their numbers are large, and their quarrelsome temper well known, they are disliked by the other Indians, in spite of their hospitable and humorous dispositions. Less civilised than the Arrawaks, their lives are passed in improvident activity; their more courageous tempers are unhappily tinged with cruelty. They are the Cossacks of the South, and, like them, prowl about in bands, not very particular as to their acts and manners. The time of peace is usually devoted to festivity and amusement.

3rd. The Warrows, Warrays, or Warraus, are the maritime portion of the native tribes of British Guiana, and inhabit the sea-coast between the rivers Pomeroon and Orinoco. They are a short, hardy race of fishermen and sailors, subsisting chiefly by boat-building. They are not absolutely black, as has been stated by an erudite writer, but are of a dark, dirty red colour, and in their manners are bold, adventurous, and active. They are very improvident, and inclined to dissipation, but have

acquired some renown by their cleverness in boat architecture. From the useful timber-trees which grow in the forests they manufacture canoes and corials of considerable size and strength. Some of these are large enough to carry upwards of a hundred men, besides cannon. They are constructed on the best model for speed, elegance, and safety, without line or compass, and without the least knowledge of hydrostatics;* they have neither joint nor seam, plug nor nail, and are an extraordinary specimen of untaught material skill. These boats are frequently used by the Spaniards as privateering launches. A canoe forty feet long, six broad, and three deep in the centre, capable of carrying twenty-five men, besides baggage and "material" for two months, was bought by Mr. Hillhouse for about ten pounds sterling. He describes it as traversing falls, sailing through rollers, and being hauled over rocks and sands, and capable of lasting for ten years without a patch, and far superior to any European craft for such purposes.

With their skill and assiduity in this particular branch of workmanship, they might soon acquire sufficient means to improve their condition; but their improvident habits render such an expectation hopeless, for they spend in debauchery the money earned by their craft.

The knowledge they display in this particular species of handicraft naturally leads to the inquiry, who imparted it to them? How did they acquire that combination of mechanical powers indispensable to the production of such a proof of ingenuity as a well-built boat, so unlike the rude canoes of the surrounding tribes? It appears reasonable to suppose that they must have obtained this knowledge by admixture with some Old World race, of whose intercourse with them no trace remains.

* Montgomery Martin.

The Warrows inhabit, by preference, a flat marshy land on the Pomeroon coast, between the two rivers above named, and extending twenty or thirty miles into the interior. This tract of land is intersected in all directions by rivers and creeks. The principal of which, the Morocco, the Mora, the Guainia or Waini, and the Barima, frequently inundate the whole territory; so that the inhabitants may almost be said to live in the water. "At the western extremity of the detour of the Morocco is a large savannah, through which runs one of those extraordinary canals without current, which, on a smaller scale, like the Cassiquiare, joins two rivers, and insulates the coast lands from the river Morocco to the Waini, or Guainia. These canals are called 'Etabbo,' from 'Eta' (Mauritia), and 'abbo,' water-course, being generally found in large swamps of Mauritias, which is the case in this instance; the verge of this savannah being so exclusively surrounded by these palms that scarcely another kind of tree is to be recognised."*

From these causes it may be inferred that the culture of the soil is next to impossible. The creeks abound, however, in a variety of fish, especially the siluri, which, eaten both fresh and smoked, supply the natives with food.

At the heads of creeks, where the land is firm and dry, a few ground provisions are grown, and these, with the useful Mauritia palm, furnish sufficient subsistence. This invaluable tree grows in clusters, and almost every part is used. The leaf serves to thatch the huts, raised on a platform just above the level of the water, which in these regions is three feet above the earth for three-fourths of the year. Starch is procured from the pith of the interior of the tree, and a kind of paste or

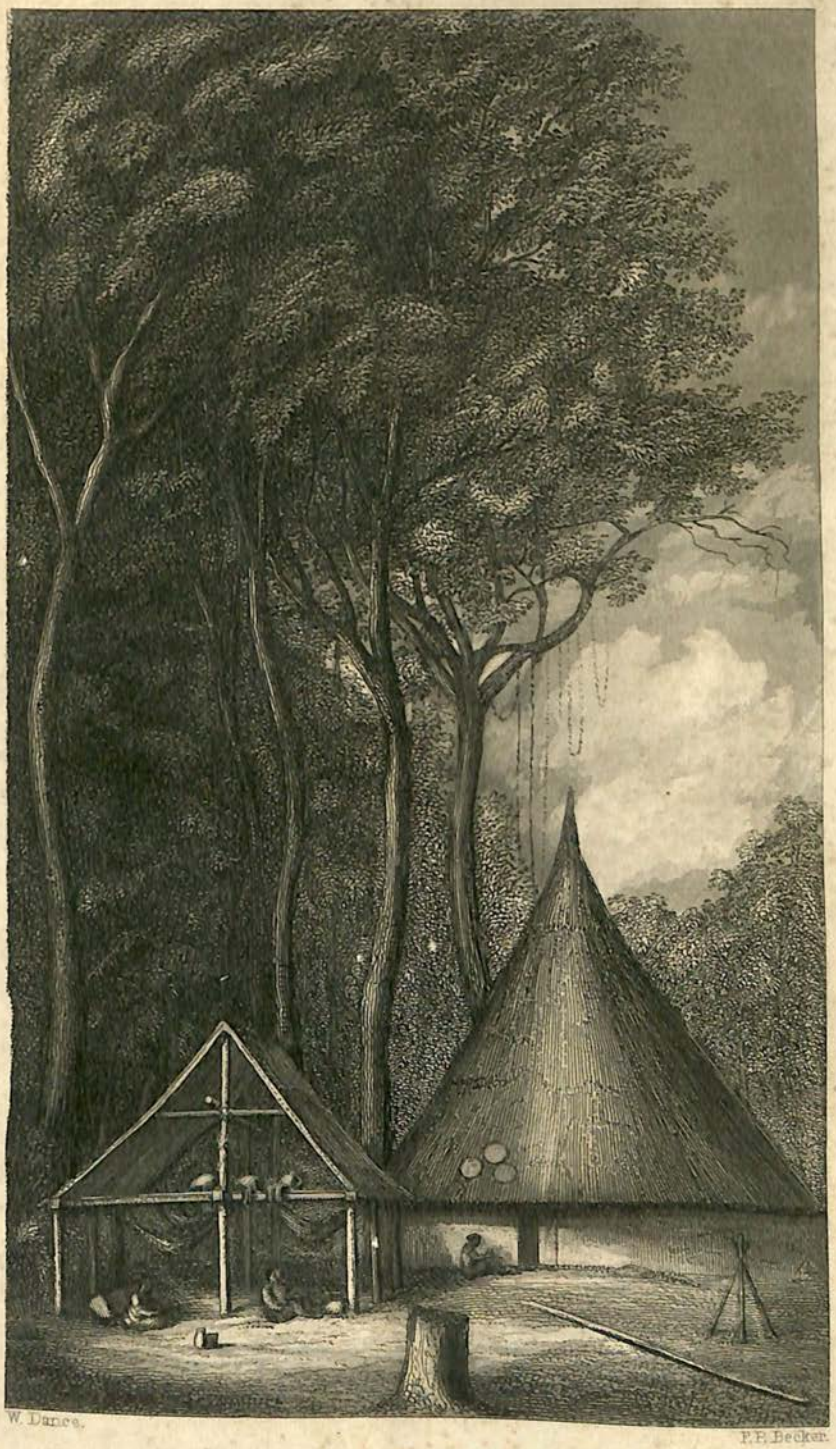
* Warrow Land of British Guiana. Hillhouse.

bread is manufactured from other parts. A beetle burrows in the green part of the trunk, and is considered a great delicacy. The branches of the trees serve to construct the dwelling-houses, which last for a very long period. It has been observed with regard to these singular people, that they have a peculiar broad or spread foot (duck's foot, as it has been termed), which enables them to traverse with some degree of ease the muddy shores and marshes they inhabit. In these and other respects they bear a close resemblance to the littoral or coast tribes of the Maranon, a dirty, indolent, and apathetic race.

4th. The Macousi, Macusi, Macoushi, or Macoosi Indians, occupy the open savannahs of the Rupununi, Barima, and the mountain chains Pacaraima and Canuku, and may be estimated at about 2000 in number.* They have been described as inoffensive, hospitable, industrious and provident; but capable of defending themselves against the more martial Accawais and Caribs. Mr. Hillhouse considers them timid, taciturn, and obedient; but deficient in stature and strength. The Macousi Indian has the credit, if any, of preparing the famous Wourali poison when a supply happens to be required. The Macousi seeks the various ingredients of which this poison is composed in the depths of the forests. The principal is the Wourali vine, which grows wild; having procured a sufficient quantity of this, he next seeks a bitter root, and one or two bulbous plants which contain a green and glutinous juice. These being all tied together, he searches for two species of venomous ants; one large and black, the "muneery,"† about an inch long, and found in nests near to aromatic shrubs; the other a small red one, found under the leaves of

* Bernau's Missionary Labours.

† The sting of the "muneery" is very severe, and occasions fever.



W. Dance.

P.P. Becker.

Macusi Huts, at the wood Camass-aren, near Pirara.

London, Longman & Co.

several kinds of shrubs. Providing himself now with some strong Indian pepper, and the pounded fangs of the "labarri" and "conna-couchi" snakes, the manufacturer of poison proceeds to his deadly task in the following manner:

"He scrapes the Wourali vine and bitter root into thin shavings, and puts them into a kind of colander made of leaves; this he holds over an earthen pot, and pours water on the shavings; the liquor which comes through has the appearance of coffee. When a sufficient quantity has been procured, the shavings are thrown aside. He then bruises the bulbous stalks, and squeezes a proportionate quantity of their juice through his hands into the pot. Lastly, the snakes' fangs, ants, and pepper are bruised, and thrown into it. It is placed then on a slow fire, and as it boils, more of the juice of the Wourali is added, according as it may be found necessary, and the scum is taken off with a leaf; it remains on the fire till reduced to a thick syrup, of a deep brown colour. As soon as it has arrived at this state, a few arrows are poisoned with it, to try its strength."*

Females are excluded during its manufacture, and there are certain forms which are rigidly adhered to in the process.

The Indians themselves consider it a baneful task, and are not very communicative on the subject, so that after all it is possible that the preparation of this deadly poison has never been thoroughly investigated.

It has been stated by Montgomery Martin that the Accawais manufacture the Wourali poison, but I believe this to be incorrect; it is well known, however, that almost all the tribes are acquainted with the use of it, and it is

* Waterton's Wanderings, p. 51.

frequently brought to town for sale by the Arrawaks and others. Weapons charged with it are also sold, but it is commonly believed that the most powerful preparations of the poison are rarely suffered to leave the localities where they are distilled. The Macousis have been described as "residing in the deep recesses of the forests of the interior," and as implacable in their revenge; "probably," adds the same authority, "they are the aborigines of the country, and flying before more civilised tribes, as we find to be the case in every part of the eastern hemisphere."*

To test the strength of the poison on their arrows they wound trees, and if the leaves fall off or die within three days, they consider the poison as sufficiently virulent, but not otherwise.

The Macousis are at present the most numerous of the tribes in British Guiana, but are supposed to have resided formerly on the banks of the Orinoco.

5th. The Carabisce, Carabeesi, Charaibes, Caribs, or Galibis, originally occupied the principal rivers, but as the Dutch encroached upon their possessions they retired inland, and are now daily dwindling away.

According to Mr. Hillhouse, they could formerly muster nearly 1000 fighting men, but are now scarcely able to raise a tenth part of that number. They have been described by other writers as brave, credulous, proud, and obstinate. Probably their pride may be traced to a tradition which prevails amongst them of their having once occupied the Caribbean Islands, and which is in some degree supported by the fact that the names of many rivers, points, and islands, both in Trinidad and the Leeward Islands, are decidedly Caribesee.†

* Montgomery Martin. † Ibid.

They are of a bright copper colour, and are designated by a patch of arnotto on their foreheads. With this dye they also stain their bodies and legs. Their language is allied to that of the Accawai, but they are of a bolder and more independent character. They build their houses in a manner different from that of the other tribes, making them long and round at the top. They dwell in preference in the open lands; and though warlike, they are fond of cultivating land, and disposed to traffic.

They are well inclined to strangers, but require to be treated with some ceremonious consideration. Their friendship has been represented to be as warm as their enmity is dangerous. The Charaibes of Guiana still fondly cherish the tradition of Raleigh's alliance; and, according to Bancroft, "to this day preserve the English colours which he left with them at parting."*

The smaller islands of the Caribbean Sea were formerly thickly populated by this tribe, but now not a trace of them remains. They were considered by Columbus as cannibals; and it is believed by many that, being of a restless, adventurous spirit, they gradually became possessed of the group of the small islands, destroying the original male inhabitants and sparing the women. This argument derives strength from the statement that the former islanders spoke two languages: the men the true Carib dialect, and the women the language peculiar to their race, and to that of the inhabitants of the large islands of Jamaica and Hispaniola, which the Caribs never reached.

The Carib calls himself Banares; literally, a man coming from beyond the sea.†

The Caribs were once, undoubtedly, the lords of the

* Bancroft's Guiana, 1769. † Labats.

soil.* It has been asserted by Rochefort, however, who published an account of the Antilles, in 1658, that the "Charaibes," as he calls them, were originally a nation of Florida, in North America. He supposes that "a colony of Apalachian Indians, having been driven from that continent, arrived at the Windward Islands, and exterminating the native male inhabitants, took possession of their lands and women." Of the larger islands, he presumes "that the natural strength, extent, and population, affording security to the natives, these happily escaped the destruction which overtook their unfortunate neighbours; and thus arose the distinction observable between the inhabitants of the larger and smaller islands." To this supposition, Bryan Edwards, in his "History of the West Indies," opposes several arguments, the principal of which proves the existence of numerous and powerful tribes of Charaibes on the southern peninsula, extending from the river Orinoco to Essequebo, and throughout the whole province of Surinam even to Brazil; moreover, the language of the Charaibes, or Caribbees, was also that of some of the West India islands; and Rochefort himself admits that the tradition of the islanders referred constantly to Guiana. So that it may be fairly concluded that the inhabitants of the Caribbean Isles were only the descendants of the original Charaibes of South America, and differing altogether from the aborigines of the larger West India Islands, such as Hispaniola, Jamaica, and Hayti.

But where did the continental Charaibes themselves originally come from? There are many writers who ascribe to them an Oriental source from across the Atlantic.

* A tradition formerly existed among some of the Indian tribes, that black men had been known to inhabit the mountainous interior. A similar tradition is reported among the South Sea Islanders.

This is supposed to have occurred in the following manner by Bryan Edwards,* who argues the point at considerable length. He conceives it possible that in ancient times vessels from the east, whilst cruising about, or exploring the coast of Africa, might have been driven out to sea, and, falling in with the trade winds, have been guided to the eastern shores of South America; but there is no proof to support this opinion, and it is opposed to the belief of Dr. Robertson,† who observes "that such events are barely possible, and *may* have happened, but that they ever did happen we have no evidence, either from the clear testimony of history or the obscure intimations of tradition." The probability of an eastern origin is strengthened, however, by the assertion of a distinguished scientific writer,‡ who, although classing the Caribi, Galibi, or Caribbees as the aborigines of the countries bordering on the Gulf of Mexico, and giving the following description of them by D'Orbigny, "complexion yellowish, stature middle, forehead not so much arched as in other cases, eyes obliquely placed, and raised at the outer angle," yet observes himself: "These traits, which belong to the great nomadic races of South America, approximate to those of the nomades of High Asia. The complexion is nearly the same, for these nations do not generally belong to the red men of the New World; the face is round, the nose short, but the nostrils are not so wide or patulous, nor do the cheek bones project so much as in the Asiatic races. Von Spix and Martius thought the Caribs strikingly similar to the Chinese and other Oriental tribes."

Many travellers have also made the same remark. Thus a wanderer in many lands writes to this effect: "They (that is, the Bucks, or Caribs) resemble the

* See History of the West Indies. † History of America.
‡ Pritchard's History of Man, p. 465.

Asiatics in more points than any people I ever saw; so much so that I really thought myself once more in Ceylon as I looked upon them here, and as I had seen them in their visits to town and the different estates on which I had been."*

It is also certainly true that many words used in the Carib language resemble in sound and meaning those in the Oriental dialects, as the following list will show:

Carib Term.	Meaning in French, according to Rochefort.	Similar Words in Oriental Dialect.	Meaning in English.
Liani	Sa femme	Li Hene	His wife
Yene neri	Ma femme	Hene Herani	My wife
Uae yete	Venez ici	Aca ati	Come hither
Rarbet	Maison publique	Qir, or, qra bit	Walled house
Encka	Collier	Onq	Necklace
Yene kali	Mon collier	E'onq ali	My necklace
Hue hue	Du bois	Oä	Wood
Nora	Ma peau	Oürni	My skin
Nané-guaete	Je suis malade	Nanecheti	I am sick
Halea tibou	Sois le bien venu	Yeha li e thibou	Good welcome to you
Phoubae	Souffler	Phouhe	To blow
Toubana vra	Couverture d'une maison	Di bue oür	Roof of a house
Bayou boukaa	Vâ t'en	Boua bouak	Go thy way
Baika	Mange	Bge	Eat
Aika	Manger	Akl	To eat
Nichiri	Mon nez	Necheri	My nose
Natoni boman	Dounez moi à boire	Natoni bamen	Give me drink

The Caribs inhabit chiefly the Lower Mazaruni and Cuyuni; a few are found at the Corentyn, the Rupununi, and the Guidaru rivers. Independently of the analogy arising from language and appearance, many of their habits and customs closely resemble those of the east; such as their mode of burial, the painting of their bodies, their conduct at births and funerals, &c. Polygamy, also, is allowed to, and practised by, those who can afford it.

Some Indian tribes regard certain animals and birds as unclean, or unlawful to be eaten; such as the larger fish, the domestic hog, the cow, &c.

* Life of Alexander. If, as seems probable, the natives of South America are referable to an eastern origin, I know of no better theory of their emigration than that suggested by Robertson in his "History of America."

They eat *parched* corn, like the Egyptians.

The roofs of the huts of some tribes are pointed like those of eastern nations.

A brother of a deceased Indian is expected to take the widow to wife, unless he himself is otherwise provided for. Moreover, as already noticed, the "picture-painting," as observed by travellers in the interior, bears a marked resemblance in character to that of the Hebrew, Syrian, and Chaldean languages.

I have confined this enumeration of the tribes now inhabitating British Guiana, to the principal and well-known castes in the neighbourhood of Georgetown; but I should observe, that early writers have transmitted to us elaborate descriptions of numerous other tribes that are now almost unknown.* When we come to consider their names and numbers, we are forced to conclude either that this part of the world was formerly much more important and thickly populated than it is at present; or to suppose that the varieties thus spoken of, instead of representing any positive differences, consisted merely of divisions and subdivisions of tribes and families, who, settling, for the most part, on the borders of some large stream, or in the vicinity of some mountainous height, derived from that particular locality the names and usages by which they were severally distinguished.

However this may be, it is certain that their number is now constantly diminishing. In the first ages of discovery they were treated as slaves by the Europeans who emigrated to their soil—no longer permitted to cultivate their scanty provision grounds, or to pursue their primitive occupations as huntsmen and fishermen, and compelled to work at unaccustomed labours for the benefit of their conquerors. But this system recoiled

* Sir Walter Raleigh has a long list of the different tribes he met with. See account of Second Voyage, Hakluyt's, vol. iii.

upon its authors, and under the steady colonisation of the Dutch it became a law of the land that no Bok, or Bokken, as these people were called, should be treated as slaves.

The following account of the names and number of minor native tribes formerly inhabiting Guiana, is gathered from different writers on the subject:

The Tavias were tribes who lived near the coasts and rivers, and were about 10,000 or 15,000 in number.

The Itouranes was the name given to an inland people, whose habits and numbers were unknown.

The Guajanas were a small tribe, who inhabited the Carony river, or its neighbourhood.

The Mapoyas inhabited the neighbourhood of the Orinoco as well as the Quirrubas, who lived to the south of that river.

The Andagues and Abavas lived chiefly to the north of the river Orinoco.

The Caberes, Achaguas, and Salivas, resided on the rivers Guabiares and Bichada.

The Chiricoas and Guajivas dwelt near the river Meta.

The Saruras were established between the rivers Meta and Sinaruco.

The Otkomacquen (a bearded race) and Paos lived between Sinaruco and Apuri.

The Guianos were also a bearded race like the last.

In French Guiana, the Galibes from Cayenne to the Amazon, the Coussari and the Maraones were found.

The Palicouris were marked by black streaks from ear to ear.

The Aromayous and the Noragues lived also near these rivers.

The Pirions, Nacouanis, Maurianse, Tocayennes, Tarcupes, Cousanis, Armagoutous, Maprouanis, lived near the river Oyapoko.

The Akoguovas lived near the river Camopi; they had holes in their cheeks, and were adorned with feathers.

The Mayets, Maracoupes, Mayhas, Kanararious, and Arikozets, Makapus, Oyampis, Ayauainques, Caicoucianes, and Maikichouous, were inland races.

The Aronakaanes, Coumaous, Maykianes, Amacidous, Oaroubas, Amenayous, Apiaoues, Akouchiens, and Tapouyranas, the Baricours, Maroupis, Manaus, Certanes, Arouhayous, Calipoures, Sahaques, Anchious, Ayes, Parahouaries, Cayars, were other tribes but little known.

The Zaparas sprang from an intermarriage of the Macusis and Arecunas; they have been represented as an ugly race, resembling the Macusis. They inhabited the banks of the Barima, and the mountains Tupae Eng and Warkamany, and were about 300 in number.

The Guinau have been said to live in a savage state of perfect nudity, and dwelling on tributaries of the river Parisna. They saluted each other on the rising and setting of the sun.

The Maiougking were allied to the Guinau Indians as to habits and mode of life.

The Kirishanas inhabited the mountains between the rivers Orinoco and Ocamo, and are represented as being very savage and cruel tribes, living in a state of perfect nudity.

The Acosi, Awake, Wapishiana, Altorias, Tarumas, Wiebec, Prianas, Camuuna, Arecunas, and Oewakees, are also the names of several other tribes which have been met with by late travellers. But there is little certainty to be placed either on the names or existence of these various races.

The knowledge we possess of their several languages is too scanty, and our intercourse with them too limited,

to admit of anything like a satisfactory account of the numerous dwellers on this vast tract of country.

The number of Indians who occupy the territories of British Guiana has been estimated at about 7000 by some, while others have computed them at from 15,000 to 20,000, including those from the maritime districts and those extending as far south as the river Rupununi.

These tribes are distributed over different parts of the country, according to chance or caprice. They appear to have no definite or distinct landmarks as respects territory; but nevertheless, among the most savage of the Indians, there is a feeling of delicacy, or an implied understanding, which prevents them from trespassing on lands ordinarily occupied by others. There are striking variances amongst them in physical configuration, character, habits, and language. With respect to the latter, the differences are strongly marked.

The Indian of one tribe rarely understands the dialect of another, and although sometimes separated by only a few leagues, they are unable when they meet to communicate with each other by conversation. Very little accurate information has been obtained concerning their languages. Whenever an attempt has been made by travellers and missionaries to investigate these dialects, it has only led to a confusion that has darkened the inquiry. Thus when the Lord's Prayer was translated into the Arrawak by three or four different gentlemen, no one who compared the translations given by the Rev. Mr. Bernau and Brett, and Mr. Hillhouse, could believe that they were intended to give expression to the same subject. A reference to a table or vocabulary of words furnished by Mr. Hillhouse,* and to his version of the

* Indian Notices.

Lord's Prayer, accompanied by that given by the Rev. Mr. Bernau,* which I have inserted in the Appendix, will sufficiently explain the difficulty of obtaining correct information relative to the languages of the Indians.

The natives are at present sufficiently pacific in their characters or habits, whatever might have been their practices or tendencies in former times. They have been accused of cowardice, but it is notorious that when quarrels or wars arise, the passions of the native are roused to the highest pitch, and human life is held of little account. In such extremities they become perfectly reckless of danger, and indifferent to death; no mercy or quarter is either sought or expected. It is in fact war to the death, and terrible are the incidents which might be selected in illustration of these tragical scenes. Their warlike weapons, and instruments for the chase and fishing, are ingenious and substantial. The tomahawk, or war club, is fashioned into various forms, generally club-shaped, but with sharp angles, and truncated at the extremity. Bows and arrows of several sizes and shapes are manufactured, and the latter are pointed with fish bones, stone, or iron, and frequently steeped in the deadly Wourali poison.

One kind of arrow, called wiawakasi, is used for shooting fish and labba; another kind, called sarapa, for fish only; while a third, called assetaha, is employed in the havoc of birds. The bows are generally made of washeba, or letter wood. A kind of shield, called haha, is used in martial exercises and games. The labba is also destroyed by a species of arrow, termed attum. A kind of harpoon, called natta, or arrow, made of the mid-rib of the leaf of the ita palm, is sometimes used to spear fish, which are also sometimes caught in a trap, named masua. A blowpipe with small arrows is fre-

* Missionary Labours in British Guiana.

quently employed in hunting. They also manufacture anklets of seed, teeth, and other substances, as well as head-dresses, or caps, called garracoom, made of wicker-work and feathers; likewise necklaces, fans, rings, baskets, nets, mats, and other articles.

Rude drums, flutes, harps (tarimba), and whips, named macquari, made of the tibisiri, or threads of spire of the ita palm, are made by them, and used in the war or funeral dances occasionally indulged in.

The games or sports of the Indians are few, frivolous, and not very decorous. They are so dull and uninteresting as to yield little amusement, and even the children have hardly any pleasure in them. Life is either too serious, or too trivial, to be relieved of its monotony and dreariness by such puerile resources.

The domestic habits and qualities of some of these Indian tribes are not a little curious.

Chastity is not considered an indispensable virtue amongst the unmarried women, but when once affianced, they are singularly faithful and constant. Indeed, the fearful vengeance inflicted in the rare cases of infidelity that occur amongst them, tends greatly to preserve untarnished the honour of the Indian dames. They are by no means an immoral race, in spite of the barbarism of their daily life. If an Indian, by good luck, or good management, obtains possession of several wives, the oldest is not discarded or neglected, but on the contrary, exercises supreme authority over the younger females of the household, and occasionally over the gentleman himself, who pays great respect to his ancient squaw, or first love. She acts as a sort of house or hut-keeper to the rest, and cooks their simple meals. It would not, therefore, be difficult for her to poison any one of the family who might offend her.

Parturition is attended with few inconveniences to the

The "Belle" of the Wapisianas Mayoru Eppung.

London, Longman & Co.

female Indian; as soon as the child is born, it is not an uncommon thing to see the mother proceed to a neighbouring stream, where she performs the necessary ablutions for herself and infant. There is little in the way of dress to give her much trouble, nor does the occurrence occasion any interruption to her usual duties. The husband, however, is not let off so easily; the etiquette of savage life requires that he should take to his hammock for several days, where, with solemn countenance, and an appearance of suffering, he receives the visits of his acquaintances, who either condole or rejoice with him, as the case may be.

The mode of life of these people is simple and primitive. Every tribe has its own hunting-ground; each family its own plantation, consisting of a spot of land, cleared of tall trees, and cultivated with provisions, such as cassada, tanias, and corn. Each family possesses within itself the few utensils necessary for cooking and eating, such as rude earthenware vessels of various shapes and sizes, which are supposed by some people to bear resemblance to the Etruscan vases in form. How admirably are their simple wants supplied by the multiplied ingenuity of Nature! for where the intelligence of man is inferior, and his civilisation undeveloped, she seems to compensate for these defects by the greater vigour of her own productions. How congenial such a climate to their modes of life, and to their tastes. Tracking the silent forests in quest of game, or floating along the prolific streams, they become masters of all they see. Unrivalled in dexterity and cunning, they can steal unheard upon the unwary bird, or transfix with the barbed arrow the unsuspecting fish as it basks near the surface of the stream. The food of the Indian consists of fish, birds, and many of the smaller animals, which to European palates would not be very acceptable. The

staff of life with him is the dried root of the cassava, of which there are two kinds, the bitter and the sweet. They are both eaten, and when ground, can be made into an excellent kind of cake or bread; other roots are also eaten, and the succulent and other fruits of the forest furnish a rich dessert. Their drink is water, except upon feast days, or occasions of rejoicing, when a fermented liquor, called paiwori, or piwarri, is used as an intoxicating beverage, its remarkable diuretic properties alone preserving them from the baneful effects of the fearful potations in which they indulge. They have also another intoxicating beverage, called cassiri. The paiwori is made of a fermented decoction of the cassava bread, large lumps of which are chewed by the women, to increase the fermentation.* It is like malt liquor in taste and appearance. The hand of civilised man has offered to them other intoxicating drinks, which need not be enlarged upon in this place. Scattered about in various parts of the country, their habitations were, and still are, merely rude huts, raised upon poles or branches, and trunks of trees, and thatched in by the leaves of the troolie and other palms. When it is stated that some of the leaves of the troolie-tree are nearly thirty feet long, and three broad, it is easy to understand that a substantial covering can thus be made. The Warrows, or race of fishermen, use chiefly the mauritia or eta palm in the construction of their abodes, which are generally raised on the cut stem of these trees over the water, and covered in by these beautiful and useful leaves.

It was in allusion to this race that the learned traveller Humboldt fell into the error of describing them as living "suspended from the tops of trees;" and the scientific Dr. Prichard, who calls the Warrows "Guarannas," says

* It has been remarked, that the chewing of the bread for this purpose occasions in the women occasionally a kind of scurvy.

"they inhabit the two islands in the delta of the Orinoco, where they build their houses upon trees." The same author, also, in confirmation of the view that the Caribbees are the true aborigines of the land of Guiana, says that "the lesser Antilles received from this nation the name of Caribbean Islands." In former times there appears to have been great enmity existing between the Caribbees and Arrawaks, and the charge of cannibalism has been laid at the door of these benighted savages, especially the Caribs. We believe that very few would now deny that such a practice has existed, but either the bitter feuds have passed away which gave rise to such a revolting usage, or the mind of the Indian has insensibly undergone an alteration. It is very true that some of the fiercer passions still rage unchecked in his unchristianised heart. A slight to an Indian is rarely allowed to pass without retaliation; and even among themselves the death of a relation or friend by another party is always sure to be followed by the darkest revenge.* The victim may long escape; he may contrive to put off the evil hour, but an insatiate pursuer is always on his track. Even in cases of ordinary death, suspicion sometimes falls upon some unfortunate individual, especially if, after application to a Pe-i-man, or Piai-man, or conjuror, a murderer is suspected. In order to ascertain by whom the supposed deed was done, the following account is given by a late interesting writer:†—"A pot is filled with certain leaves, and placed over a fire; when it begins to boil over, they consider that on which side the scum falls first, it points out the quarter from whence the murderer came. A consultation is therefore held, and the place is pointed out, and the individual whose death is to atone

* In this and many other respects they resemble the Arabs, as described by the historian Gibbon.

† Bernau, Missionary Labours.

for that of the deceased. If he cannot be found, although he will be sought for years, any other member of his family will suffice. One of the nearest relations is charged with the execution of the direful deed. The 'canayi,' or the avenger of blood, forthwith puts on a curiously-wrought cap, takes up his weapons, and pursues his path in search of his victim. From the time of his leaving until his return home he is to abstain from meat, and lives upon what the forest supplies; nor is he allowed to speak with any he may meet on his road. Having made his way to the devoted place, and finding his victim there; he will lurk about for days and weeks till a favourable opportunity shall offer to perpetrate his revenge. If the victim pointed out be a man, he will shoot him through the back; and if he happens to fall dead to the ground, drag the corpse aside, and bury it in a shallow grave. The third night he goes to the grave, and presses a pointed stick through the corpse. If on withdrawing the stick he finds blood on the end of it, he tastes the blood in order to ward off any evil effects that might follow from the murder, returning home appeased, and apparently at ease. But if it happens that the wounded individual is able to return to his home, he charges his relations to bury him, after his death, in some place where he cannot be found, and having done so, he expires, not without great pains and fearful imprecations. The reason why the avenger of blood attacks his victim from behind is evident from the circumstance that the Indian is always found armed, at least with a knife. And again, the reason why the victim desires to be buried where he cannot be found, is to punish the murderer for his deed, inasmuch as the belief prevails that if he tastes not of the blood he must perish by madness. If a woman or child be the victim, their death is brought to pass in a different way. The individual is thrown down on the

ground, the mouth forced open, and the fangs of a venomous serpent driven through the tongue. Before the poor creature can reach home, the tongue becomes inflamed and swollen, and she is unable to tell who did the deed, and death is sure to follow." As the foregoing passage illustrates many of the qualities of the Indian—viz., his vindictiveness, superstition, patience, endurance, and cunning, I may perhaps be excused for having quoted it at such length. Their disposition is otherwise kind, tolerant, and hospitable, and they look for a similar return on the part of those to whom they extend friendly offices. There is very little distinction among them as to rank, or wealth, or honour. They seem to have interests in common, and each tribe, to its minor subdivisions, may be regarded in the light of a petty republic. A chief, or captain, presides over each such division, and he generally has to acquire this position by some trying ordeal or pre-eminent quality.* In no way differing from his adherents, either in mode of life or in the appearance of authority, he yet exercises a tacit control over them. He settles their quarrels, directs their movements in hunting, fishing, and roving, and acts more as the father of a family than the chieftain of a race. They have made but trifling advance in any of the arts.

Beyond building their rude huts, and making their canoes (at which craft the Warrows are far superior to the others), and preparing a few vessels of earthenware, some neat baskets from the beautiful reeds of the interior, and their own cots, or hammocks, from different kinds of grasses, they seem to have lacked the necessity, or the ability, to improve. Their bows and arrows, in spite of the praise that has been bestowed on them, are after all but rudely fashioned. Their knowledge, if any, of work-

* In some tribes both males and females are subjected to some kind of physical torture before they can be considered admissible to associate with adults.

ing the metal has been turned to very little use; a sharpened stone, or pointed fish-bone, are the only occasional attempts to make their weapons formidable, if we except the deadly Wourali poison, or the massive tomahawk, or club which in cases of danger is employed in their defence. True to the spirit of nomades, they have raised no cities, nor restricted themselves to any particular spot or dwelling. Their warfare requires no walls, their barter no chamber of commerce, their science no lecture-room, their religion no temple. Their field of battle is the mountain and the forest; their traffic is with the inhabitants of the air, the river, and the soil. Their science is exhibited alone in their instinct; their worship is nature. Their system of agriculture is simple, and always remains the same. Their amusements are dancing, drinking, and hunting; they have no games. Their rites of baptism, marriage, burial, present no imposing ceremony. The child is named by the piai-man, or conjurer, who in darkness utters a few incantations, for which he is paid. Their marriage is sanctioned neither by form nor contract. The young Indian selects, or has selected for him, a youthful maiden, who with implicit faithfulness and simplicity regards him as a protector and companion; as in olden times, it sometimes happens that he has to win his bride by a short period of servitude. Some tribes, especially the Warrows, place the corpses of distinguished individuals in a canoe, surrounded with almost all their worldly possessions, even, sometimes, to their very dogs. Lamentations and funeral fires ensue; and the widow and children are passed over to the brother or next male relative. And so the drama of life ends.

The Caribs sometimes collect the bones of those they esteem, and have them cleansed, painted, and preserved, or reduced to ashes.

Their religion partakes of the character of their habits It is fanciful and ideal. They believe in the immortality of the soul. Conscious of a Creator, they feel so incapable of appreciating his existence, that beyond wonder and awe at the sublime phenomena of nature in the thunderstorm and gale of wind, they exhibit no desire to obtain a nearer knowledge of Him; but make themselves familiar with spirits or inferior deities, to whom they attribute the immediate occurrences of daily life, whether of good or evil. To such spirits they never offer worship; although it is stated by a writer on one of the West Indian Islands, that idols have been discovered buried in the ground.* Certain men from each tribe assume to themselves offices similar to that of priests in more civilised countries. They are called Pe-i-men, and act as conjurers, soothsayers, physicians, judges, and priests, thus uniting all the professions in their vicarious persons. They are looked up to with some reverence, and by their mysterious conduct and cunning intelligence, manage to make it a life of some profit to themselves. It would be useless and unprofitable to enter further upon the details of such a creed—if creed it may be called—the chief articles of which are a dim belief in an universal father, whom they called Tamousi, or according to others, Maconaima, and a confident but shapeless faith in a future state.

* Hughes' History of Barbadoes.

CHAPTER II.

SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY—THE PROBABLE DISCOVERY OF GUIANA BY COLUMBUS ON HIS THIRD VOYAGE IN 1498—EXPEDITION OF ALONZO DE OJEDA IN 1499; OF VINCENT JANEZ PINZON IN 1500; AND OF DIEGO DE NICUESSA IN 1509—RUMOURS AND FABULOUS ACCOUNTS OF THE EL DORADO—EXPEDITIONS OF DIEGO DE ORDAS IN 1530; OF HERRERA IN 1533; OF ANTONIO SIDERMO AND AUGUSTIN DELGADO IN 1536; AND OF GONZALO PIZARRO AND ORELLANA IN 1540-45—THE FRENCH ATTEMPT TO TRADE WITH BRAZIL AND GUIANA IN 1550-55—EXPEDITIONS OF PEDRO DE OSUA, JUAN CORTESO, GASPAR SYLVA, JUAN GONZALES, PHILIP DE VREN, PEDRO SYLVA, FATHER GALA, PEDRO DE LIMPIAS, GERONIMO ORTOL, PEDRO HERNANDES SERPA, GONZALES CASADA, DIEGO VARGAS, CACERES, ALONZO HERRERA, AND DIEGO LOGARDO—THE DUTCH VISIT GUIANA IN 1580—EXPEDITION OF ANTONIO BERREO OR BERREJO—DOMINGO VERA TAKES FORMAL POSSESSION OF GUIANA IN 1593—SIR WALTER RALEIGH VISITS GUIANA IN 1595; ADVENTURES AND RETURN; SENDS CAPT. KEYMIS IN 1596, AND VISITS IT AGAIN IN 1597, GIVING A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE COUNTRY ON HIS RETURN TO EUROPE; HIS FINAL EXPEDITION TO GUIANA IN 1617, AND ITS UNSUCCESSFUL RESULT—REFLECTIONS ON THE EARLIER ADVENTURERS.

THE precise time when the shores of Guiana were first visited cannot be fixed with certainty; but there is no doubt that they were known at a very early period. The spirit of inquiry had been roused to an incredible degree among European nations by the discoveries of Columbus, who explored an ocean then almost unknown, and, believing firmly in the existence of other continents, lived to prove the fact to the incredulous and astonished inhabitants of the Old World. His example was rapidly followed, and adventurers from all parts of the world set

sail in the excitement, and in the hope of adding to the list of discoverers.

The broad Atlantic, so long a wonder to the inquisitive spirit of man, became, in the fifteenth century, a scene of action to the enterprising. The favouring gales which swept the barks over the waters could not but guide some to the prominent eastern boundaries of the South American continent. Conspicuous in this region were found Guiana and its rude inhabitants. A number of marvellous stories are related in the chronicles of these early expeditions, the bulk of which are entitled to no more credit than the legends of the Pantheon. Amongst them we may at once dismiss as a pure fable the reputed discovery of the American continent by the crew of a vessel accidentally driven by an easterly wind to a continent hitherto unknown, who returned, after great distress and difficulty, and who all died shortly after their arrival in Europe, without disclosing to any one, save Columbus, the account of their voyage.*

Contrary to the opinions generally entertained on this subject, it would appear that the discovery of America dates from a period anterior to that of Columbus. The learned Humboldt, in his chapter on oceanic discoveries, assigns the credit of the discovery of America—at least, in its northern portions—to the Northmen of Europe. It occurred in the following manner:—Towards the close of the ninth century, Naddod was driven by storms to Iceland, while attempting to reach the Faroe Islands, which had been already visited by the Irish. The first settlement of the Northmen was made in 875 by Ingolf. The colonisation of Iceland, which Naddod first called Snowland (Snjoland), was carried through Greenland, in a south-western direction, to the new continent. In 986

* Robertson's History of America, vol. vi. p. 336.

parts of America were seen by Bjarne Herjulfsson, in a voyage from Greenland to the southward, but no attempt at landing was made by him. In the year 1000, the continent of North America was discovered by Leif, the son of Eric the Red. He first saw the land at the Island of Nantucket, 1 deg. south of Boston; then in Nova Scotia, and lastly in Newfoundland. But the historical accounts of the intercourse maintained between the settlers in the extreme north of Europe, such as Greenland and Iceland, with the continent of North America, do not extend beyond the fourteenth century, so that the merit of opening this immense continent to the knowledge of Europe, in 1492, really belongs to Columbus, who, unlike the previous discoverers, was not driven thither by storms, but was led to it by his conviction that the eastern territories of the world were to be reached in that direction. Indeed, both Columbus and Amerigo Vespucei died in the belief that they had merely touched on portions of eastern Asia. It was on the 12th October, 1492, that Columbus first discovered the land of Guanahani.

According to the Germans, it would seem that Martin Behaim was one of the discoverers of the New World. He was of the noble family of the Behaims of Nuremberg, and studied under the celebrated Regiomontanus, and proceeding to Lisbon, under the patronage of the Duchess of Burgundy, where he became renowned for his nautical knowledge, he formed the acquaintanceship of Columbus. In 1483, in conjunction with Diego Cano, he commanded a squadron fitted out for discovery, and is said to have discovered the kingdom of Congo. He settled in the island of Fayal, one of the Azores, and drew a map, which is still preserved in Nuremberg. In a copy of this map, as published by Doppilmayer, in

which hardly one place is laid down in its true situation, he delineated an island, which he called St. Brandon, and which it has been imagined was some part of Guiana. But as it is placed in the same latitude with the Cape de Verd Isles, the whole story is rendered absurd. Neither are the pretensions of the Welsh, nor of the Norwegians, nor indeed of other nations, worthy of any notice, as contending for the honour of the discovery of America.

We have good reason, however, to believe that Columbus himself first discovered, or at least made known, the land of Guiana; for in August, 1498, in his third voyage, he made the island of Trinidad, and encountered much difficulty in the mouth of the river Orinoco. "This river rolls towards the ocean such a vast body of water, and rushes into it with such impetuous force, that when it meets the tide, which on that coast rises to an uncommon height, their collision occasions a swell and agitation of the waves no less surprising than formidable. In this conflict the irresistible torrent of the river so far prevails, that it freshens the ocean many leagues with its flood."* Columbus, having escaped the difficulty, "justly concluded that such a vast body of water as this river contained could not be supplied by any island, but must flow through a country of immense extent, and of consequence that he was now arrived at that continent which it had long been the object of his wishes to discover."† He accordingly sailed to the west, and landed on the continent *in several places.*

In the following year (1499), Alonzo de Ojeda, a gallant and active officer, who had accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, attended also by the famous Amerigo Vespucei, a Florentine gentleman, who had the undeserved honour of giving a name to the world dis-

* Robertson's America, book ii. p. 154. † Ibid.

covered by another, set out for a voyage of discovery in four ships, provided by the merchants of Seville. Availing themselves of the journal and charts of Columbus in his second voyage, they succeeded in reaching the eastern coast of South America, and are supposed to have made the land of Surinam after a voyage of twenty-four days. They then ran along the coast of the Gulf of Paria, passing *several large rivers*—amongst others, the rivers Essequebo and Orinoco. They saw no natives until their arrival at Trinidad, where, after *trading* with them, they stood to the west, and proceeded as far as Cape de Vela, *ranging along* a considerable extent of coast.

Not long after, Vincent Janez Pinzon, a companion of Columbus in his first voyage, sailed from Patos with four ships, January 13th, 1500, and made the land of Santa Maria de la Consolacion, or Cape St. Augustino, on the eastern angle of South America: he discovered the mighty river of the Amazons, or river Maranon, and landed on the coast at its mouth. From thence he sailed onwards, passing the rivers of Guiana as far as the river Orinoco, where it is supposed by some that he also landed. He afterwards proceeded to Hispaniola and the Bahamas. The Spaniards, according to an old writer,* on ascending the several rivers, were astonished at their size and peculiarities. On exploring the countries in the neighbourhood of the Orinoco, they received information of a territory far in the interior, which abounded in gold and emeralds, and of a salt-water lake, called *Parima;* thus leaving no doubt that so early as the time I have mentioned an acquaintance had been made with some of the tribes belonging to Guiana, among whom a tradition of his visit was known to have existed. A few years later another Spaniard received similar information on the opposite part of the coast.

* Herrera.

Although the discovery of the different portions of America succeeded each other so rapidly, it was not until about ten years after Columbus had made his first successful voyage, that the Spaniards practically attempted to form settlements on the main land. Unsupported by the crown of Spain, and at the sole expense of a few private individuals, this enterprising object was effected, chiefly through the famous Alonzo de Ojeda, who had acquired considerable reputation and wealth in some voyages of discovery; and who was assisted by another Spaniard, Diego de Nicuessa, a successful adventurer. Titles and patents (but nothing else) were granted by Ferdinand, and about 1509 two governments were established on the continent; one extending from Cape de Vela to the Gulf of Darien, and the other from this gulf to Cape Gracias à Dias, from which settlements parties were sent to explore the inland districts. The first government was given to Ojeda, the second to Nicuessa. Much formality and time were wasted in prescribing the mode by which possession should be taken. They were to expound to the natives the principal articles of the Christian Faith; to acquaint them with the powers of the Pope; to inform them of the grant which that formidable prince had made of their country to the King of Spain, and to insist upon their embracing the new religion and submitting to the Spanish authority. In default of the fulfilment of these conditions they were to be punished with fire and the sword, and their wives and families were to be reduced to servitude. As a matter of course, such arguments being rather new to the independent Indian, and somewhat too subtle for their uncultivated understandings, caused considerable confusion and opposition. Force being employed by the Spaniards when they found arguments fail, the insulted Indian, roused to a sense of his danger, replied to

both by *poisoned arrows* (another proof that the natives of Guiana were concerned in these occurrences), and effectually annihilated their invaders. The Spaniards, prevented from escaping by the loss of their ships, perished within a year in the most miserable manner. A few survivors, headed by Vasco Nunez de Bilboa and Francisco Pizarro, formed a feeble colony at Santa Maria de Antigua, on the Gulf of Darien. Such was the first reception given to Europeans in America by the simple aborigines of the interior.

The confused accounts which had been given to the Spaniards in the year 1500, about a rich city abounding in gold, silver, and precious stones, situated on the borders of the lake Parima, within the precincts of Guiana, inflamed the adventurous sprit of the age, and led to numerous enterprises, undertaken in the hope of discovering this famous region. Thus early were the cupidity and the credulity of the Spaniards excited with regard to an ideal city, with its golden palaces, and streets paved with precious stones, reflecting their gorgeous beauty in the translucent waters of the Parima. Thus early was this *El Dorado** of the west, this supposed land of surpassing loveliness and wealth, held up as the greatest object of the Spanish conqueror's ambition. Mexico had been overrun, Peru had been conquered, but still the avarice of the invader had not been satiated, and El Dorado, the highest prize in the lottery of adventure, remained yet to be drawn. Hence ensued the

* The term El Dorado was not originally applied to any particular region, but rather to an individual. According to Father Gumilla, the fable had its origin on the coast of Carthagena and Santa Martha, whence it passed to Bogota. A rumour prevailed through those regions that the sovereign prince of a country which abounded in gold, when he appeared in public, had his body sprinkled over with gold-dust; hence arose the expression of El Dorado, the gilded, or golden, which was subsequently applied to a supposed rich country. Others, however, derive the term from a religious practice among the sect of Bochica, or Idacanzas, whose chief priest stuck gold-dust upon his face and hands before he performed sacrifice.

romantic and spirited exploits, of which the following are instances.

A governor had been sent out by Ferdinand, King of Spain, and was to reside in the then capital of the Guiana del Dorado, viz., Trinidad, an island on its coast.

In the year 1530, Don Diego de Ordas, the governor of Quito, and one of the captains of Cortes, although living upon the opposite side of the continent, sent some of his people to explore Guiana. They had to pass high mountains and barren plains, and from the difficulty of the journey, and the lack of provisions, were obliged to return. According to the account of Raleigh, it would appear that one Don Martines was an officer under Diego de Ordace, and got into a considerable scrape.

"For it chanced that while Ordace, with his army, rested at the fort of Morriquito (situated some 300 miles within the land, upon the great Oronoco), and which Ordace was either the first or second that attempted Guiana, by some negligence, the whole store of powder provided for the service was set on fire, and Martines, having the chief charge, was condemned by the general, Ordace, to be executed forthwith. Martines being much favoured by the soldiers, had all the means possible procured for his life, but it could not be obtained in any other sort than this, that he should be set in a canoe alone, without any victuals, only with his arms, and so turned loose in the great river." This Martines afterwards, who had the honour of christening the city of Manoa by the name of El Dorado, escaped to Trinidad, and from thence to Juan de Puerto Rico, where remaining a long time waiting for a passage into Spain, he died.

Don Diego subsequently returned to Spain, and procured letters patent from the Emperor Charles V., which secured to him all the land he should discover from Cape de la Vela, 300 miles to the east. Still

intent on the discovery of the El Dorado, and whilst cruising near the mouth of the river Amazons, he captured some Indians who had precious stones resembling emeralds in their possession. Deluded by his prisoners into the belief that higher up this river there was a land abounding in similar productions and rich in gold, he proceeded, in 1531, with his force, consisting of several ships and about 400 men, up this mighty river; but dismayed at the loss of one of his ships, and many of his men, and harassed by the strong currents and vexatious calms, he abandoned his object, and sailed for Paria, on the Orinoco, where he found a fort that had been erected by the governor of the Guianas, Don Palameque. He took possession of this fort (although commanded by an officer of the governor's, Juan Gonçalves), under pretext of the letter patent granted to him by the emperor, and ascended the river Orinoco,* and although suffering from the want of provisions, and from the mosquitoes, bats, and other plagues, he arrived at the dwelling of the cassique Viapari (the Indian name of the river Orinoco), where, being well received, he remained for some time. On attempting to make further progress up the river, he lost his largest ship, and was obliged in consequence to follow the banks of the stream, with about 200 men, and forty horses. On his route, he met only a few Caribbean fishermen. Having once more re-embarked his troops, he proceeded up the Orinoco, about 300 miles from its mouth, when he met the large tributary stream, the Meta, which, rushing down over the rocks in the form of a huge cataract, joins the Orinoco in this singular manner. Being now obliged to retrace his steps without having succeeded in discovering the coveted El Dorado, he

* Sir W. Raleigh says he reached the river Orinoco by the river Viapari; but this was the name given to the Orinoco by the Spanish and Indians.

descended the river, to about forty-five miles from its mouth, where, on its *eastern* bank, he built a town, which he called *St. Thomas of Guiana.*

Thus had Diego de Ordás the honour of first erecting a town within the precincts of the Guianas. He soon afterwards returned to Spain, and died, either on his passage, or shortly after his arrival. In the course of these expeditions he had transported out of Spain 1000 soldiers. Situated at the confluence of the Caroni and the Orinoco, this town was never of much importance; it consisted of about 150 houses, and the inhabitants planted tobacco, and, encouraged by the fruitful soil and fine pasturage, endeavoured to grow provisions, and to breed cattle and horses, which they procured from Comana; but a few years after, the English and Dutch, jealous of the progress of the Spaniards, disturbed them in their possessions. It was not, however, until the year 1570, that these disturbances commenced, and in 1629, on the 30th November, but according to others, on the 11th December, a Dutch force of nine ships, and some sloops under Admiral Pater, took the town, which they plundered and burned. Some of the inhabitants escaped to Comana, and others repairing about seven miles further up the river, on the same side, erected another town.*

Previously to these occurrences, however, the governor of Paria sent his lieutenant, Alfonso de Herrera, with 200 soldiers, and five vessels, to St. Thomas of Guiana, in 1533. They had several skirmishes with the Caribbean Indians, and killed many of them. Proceeding further, they arrived at the Meta cataract, already alluded to, and, undaunted by its roaring waters, they carried their vessels over the fall, and succeeded in making the ascent of the river. Their success was not unaccom-

* St. Thomé de Nueva Guayana, the present City of Bolivar.

panied by losses and disasters. Herrera and his troops were constantly harassed by the natives, who killed many of them with their poisoned arrows. Herrera himself was severely wounded, and became mad in consequence. During his temporary insanity, Alvaro de Ordas took command of the expedition, and considering discretion the better part of valour, returned to Paria, which he reached in 1536. In the same year another expedition was undertaken by Antonio Sidenno, with whom Herrera and Augustin Delgado were associated in the conquest of Trinidad against Bawcunar, a famous king of that place. Sidenno passed by Maracapana with 500 chosen men to discover El Dorado. In this journey he is said to have got much gold, and taken many Indian prisoners, whom he manacled in irons, several of them dying on the way. Even in their deaths these Indians became formidable, for the tigers that came to feast on their dead bodies fell upon the Spaniards, who with great difficulty defended themselves from their attacks. Sidenno having died, was buried within the precincts of the empire, near the head of the river Tinados, and most of his people perished.*

Doomed to disappointment by water, in search of the El Dorado, an expedition by land was attempted by Gonzalo Pizarro, who had been appointed governor of Quito, by his brother, the famous Francisco Pizarro, who had deposed Benalcazar. Assembling together about 400 Spaniards, nearly half of whom were horsemen, and 400 Indians, to carry their provisions, which they had in abundance, Gonzalo Pizarro, a man of great courage and ambition, left the capital of Peru (Quito), in the year 1540 (others say 1544), to explore the golden land. Passing over the lofty summits of the Andes, where the cold was severely felt, they descended,

* Raleigh.

after incredible hardships, into the low country, where an almost uninhabited territory, and torrents of rain, awaited them. Advancing for many weeks through dense forests, occasional mountains, and swampy marshes, assailed by numerous insects, serpents, and some tribes of Indians; and suffering from the failure of their provisions, they still persevered, with the prospect of the glittering prize before them, until they reached the banks of the river Napo, a tributary stream of the Amazon, which, in 1536, had been already discovered by Gonzalves Dias de Pineda. Aware of the difficulties by land, they contrived to build a bark for the purpose of seeking provisions, and facilitating their exploration of the country. The command of this expedition was entrusted to Francisco Orellana, the officer next in rank to Pizarro. He had with him about fifty soldiers, and receiving his orders from Pizarro, was directed not to venture far, but to keep within reach of his party; notwithstanding these strict instructions, he boldly entered the river, and, carried away by the current, was soon out of sight. Fearlessly following the stream, this enterprising, but unprincipled officer, reached at length the broader waters of the Amazon, where he held on his course towards the ocean. Struck, as well he might be, by its fruitful banks, he occasionally made excursions on land, where he procured provisions, either by traffic, or by force, from the native tribes. It was whilst combating with some of these, that he observed, with surprise, that the women fought equally with the men, giving rise to the fable of the land of Amazons, for whatever might have been the case in his day, nothing particularly warlike on the part of the female population of that part of the globe has ever since been noticed. It was here, also, that his cupidity was excited by the sight of some precious stones, resembling emeralds, which

the Indians declared abounded higher up the river. Having named the river Orellana, after himself (a name which, though attempted to be retained by some, has given place to the equally unmerited one of Amazon), he, after incredible dangers, launched his adventurous bark into the ocean, and returned to Spain about the year 1545, where he pretended that he had discovered nations so rich, that the roofs of their temples were covered with plates of gold, and dwelt with enthusiasm on his wars with the female republics of the Amazon, and his long voyage, 1550 miles, up the river.

Meanwhile, Gonzalo Pizarro, unwilling to believe in the treachery of Orellana, proceeded along the banks of the Napo as far as its junction with the Amazon, where a rendezvous had been arranged; but receiving no account of the expedition, he tracked the banks about fifty leagues further on. Here, to his dismay, he discovered an officer who had been left to perish in the desert, because he had remonstrated against the perfidy of Orellana. The danger of his situation was now revealed to him, but with undaunted courage he retraced his steps. Distant about 1200 miles from Quito, he had to lead his dispirited and disappointed followers back through the difficult road they had traversed. Their hardships were beyond description; emaciated, worn out with hunger and fatigue, all the Indians, and the greater number of the Spaniards, perished in that fatal campaign—only eighty returned to Quito, and these in the most deplorable state, naked and famished. Thus, in the year 1542, ended one of the most famous expeditions in search of an ideal city, mocking the sun with golden mansions and silver waters.

Nor were the Spaniards the only nation credulous enough to believe in the romantic tale which had now been circulated all over Europe. It would appear that

the French, who were at this time (1550) in the habit of sending ships to the Brazilian coast, to trade with the Indians in pepper, dye, wood, and other native productions, actually undertook several voyages to discover the El Dorado, but with the same results. The cause of their failure is given in a very quaint manner by Sir Walter Raleigh, who, describing the French as taking the course of the Amazon in search of the golden land, declared that they were mistaken in the road, "den rechten Weg niet genomen hadden."*.

In one of these voyages, about the year 1555, they rescued from the Indians a Dutch traveller, "Hansstaden," of Homburg, in Hesse (who wrote an account of his travels), and were told by him that he had been a prisoner for about five years among the Indian tribes.

Upon another occasion, one Pedro de Osua, a knight of Navarre, attempted to explore Guiana. Starting from Peru with 400 soldiers, he built his brigantines upon a river called Orio, which riseth to the southward of Quito, and is very large. This Pedro de Osua had among his troops a Biscayan called Agiri, a man meanly born, and who bore no other office than that of sergeant, or alferez. This man induced the soldiers, who were worn with travail, and consumed with famine, to mutiny, and having murdered Osua, and his wife Lady Ancs, "who forsook not her lord in all his travels unto death," he took the whole charge and command to himself, with the purpose not only of making himself Emperor of Guiana, but also of Peru, and of all that side of the West Indies. His party amounted to about 700 soldiers; but not being able to reach Guiana by the Amazon, they were "enforced to disembogue at the mouth of the said Amazon, thence he coasted the land till he arrived at Marguarita, to the north of Monpatar, which is, at this day, called

* Hartsink, p. 158.

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Puerto de Tyranno, for that he there slew Don Juan de Villa Andreda, governor of Marguarita." Agiri put to the sword all those who opposed him, and took with him certain ceremones and other desperate companions; with these he went to Cumana, and there slew the governor, and otherwise behaved in the same manner as at Marguarita. He afterwards proceeded to the Coraccas, but was slain in the kingdom of Nuevo Reyno.

The following expeditions were also undertaken about this period. A Spaniard, Juan Corteso, arrived at the river of Amazons, or Orellana, with 300 men, and marched into the country; but neither himself nor his men ever returned again to tell the tale of their adventures.

Gaspar de Sylva, with his two brothers, departed from Teneriffe, accompanied by 200 men, to assist Diego de Ordas. They sought El Dorado by the river of the Amazons; but after staying there a short time, proceeded to Trinidad, where they all died.

Juan Gonsalves set sail from Trinidad to discover Guiana; he trusted more to the faith of his guides than to the number of his men. He found the territory of Guiana, so far as he entered, to be populous, plentiful in provisions, and rich in gold.

Philip de Vren and Pedro de Limpias were leaders in another expedition into Guiana; the latter was slain by an Indian cassique, named Pouina.

Jeronimo de Ortol, with 150 soldiers, failed in an attempt to reach Guiana by sea. He was carried by the current to the coast of Paria, and settled about St. Miguel; after suffering great hardships, and his substance having been all spent, he died at St. Domingo.

Pedro de Sylva, a Portuguese of the family of Rigomes de Sylva, in favour with the King of Spain, was sent with a fleet to explore Guiana, and failed also in his

object. He entered the Amazons, but was attacked by the natives, and utterly overthrown; of his whole army only a few escaped, and of these but two returned to their native country.

A certain friar, Father Sala, once made an excursion into the provinces of Guiana, taking with him only one companion, and some Indian guides. He returned with good intelligence, and is said to have brought with him eagles, idols, and other jewels of gold, in the year 1560. On a second visit to the country he was slain by the Indians.

An attempt to reach Guiana was also made by Pedro Hernandez de Serpa, who landed at Cumana, and took his journey by land towards Orinoco; but before he arrived at the borders of the river, he was attacked by a tribe of Indians, the Wikiri, and so completely routed, that, out of 300 soldiers, besides horsemen, Indians, and negroes, only eighteen returned to give an account of their leader's failure.

Another famous Spaniard, Don Gonsalves Cenunco de Cassada, sought the country by the river Papamura, and effected his return, after a fruitless journey, with much difficulty and cost. It was at his instigation that the gigantic expedition of Don Antonio de Berrejo was undertaken, which the latter declared cost him 300,000 ducats.

Afterwards Diego de Vargas, and his son Don Juan, undertook a similar enterprise, but were slain by the Indians at their first setting out.

Caceres attempted the exploration of Guiana from Nuevo Reyno de Granada, but came no nearer to it than Matachines, which bordered upon the kingdom of Granada, where he remained and peopled that territory.

It was also attempted by Alonço de Herrera upon two different occasions. He endured great misery, but never

entered one league into the country. He sought it by Viapari, or Amana, and was at last slain by a tribe of Indians, called Xaguas.

Augustine Delgado explored the country to the southward of Cumanawgotto, with fifty-three footmen and three horsemen. The wars then existing between the Indians of the vale and those of the mountains assisted him in his object. He advanced until he met with an Indian cassique, named Garamental, who received him with much kindness, and gave him some rich jewels of gold, six seemly pages, ten young slaves, and three beautiful nymphs, who bore the names of the three provinces from whence they had been sent to Garamental. Their names were Guanba, Poloquane, and Marguarata. These provinces were reputed to be very healthful, and to possess a remarkable influence in producing fair women. The Spaniards afterwards requited the manifold courtesies they had received, by absconding with all the gold that they could obtain, and seizing the Indians as prisoners, whom they conveyed in irons to Cubagua, where they sold them as slaves. Delgado was afterwards shot in the eye by an Indian, and died in consequence of the wound. Diego de Losada succeeded in his brother's place. He had many new followers, all of whom, in the end, wasted themselves in mutinies ; those that survived returned afterwards to Cubagua.

Reynoso undertook an expedition, but having endured innumerable troubles, "in the discomfort of his mind gave it over, and was buried in Hispaniola."

The Dutch, although in the habit of sending ships for the purposes of trade, which cruised along the coast from the river Amazon to the Orinoco, do not appear to have seriously entertained any scheme for seeking this land of promise. Sedate, calculating, and phlegmatic, they resisted the infatuation, and addressed themselves to

the real and practical advantages the country presented to them.

In the year 1580, some vessels being sent from the province of Zealand to carry on the rude system of barter then practised, some of the persons concerned in the expedition established themselves near the river Pomeroon, where they formed a settlement which they called New Zealand, while others of the party formed similar settlements on the river Essequebo, and at the mouth of the Abary or Wayabari Creek, where there was an Indian village called Nibie. In June or July of the ensuing year, 1581, these rational movements acquired a more solid character from a wise resolution of the States-General, which granted permission to certain individuals to follow up the experiment by fitting out an expedition for the purpose of trading along the coast and up the rivers.

While the Dutch were thus sagaciously employed, the Spaniards, undeterred by the miserable fate of so many of their countrymen who had perished in the enterprise, resolved to undertake a fresh venture in search of the El Dorado. In 1582, Don Antonio Berrejo,* by command of Don Gonsalvo Ximeny de Quesada, whose daughter he had married, set out from New Granada, and proceeded along the river Papameni, a tributary of the Orinoco. But, notwithstanding the advantages under which he started, he fell into the same errors as his predecessors, and suffered similar disasters — failure of provisions, sickness, an impracticable country, the harassing assaults of the Indians, and insubordination amongst his own troops. Utterly discomfited by these accumulated misfortunes, he returned with the wreck of his followers; but, ashamed to confess his ill success, like a true Spaniard he invented marvellous falsehoods to conceal it, and circulated absurd stories of the

* Raleigh.

sights he had seen and the incidents that had occurred to him, boasting of having a present of ten golden images very artistically worked, "zeer kunstig bewirkt," from an Indian named Anabas, who lived on the borders of Amapaja, and with whom he had concluded a treaty of peace. He very ingeniously got over the difficulty of producing these fabulous images to his countrymen by declaring that he had sent them to the King of Spain. He furthermore stated that he had discovered a civilised people, "Een handelbaar Volk,"* whose chief, Caripana, was above one hundred years old. From this imaginary personage he pretended to have obtained information of another chief named Morequito, who he stated was well acquainted with the *kingdom of Guiana*. This intelligence fired anew the cupidity of his countrymen, and a fresh batch formed themselves into an exploring party, and proceeded, under a commission from Berrejo, to open a negotiation with Morequito; but they had no sooner reached that chief than he put them all to death, with the exception of one man who escaped, and carried back to Berrejo the tidings of the fate that had befallen his companions.† Soon afterwards, however, Morequito paid the full penalty of his cruelty, being himself taken prisoner and executed—a doom which he in vain endeavoured to avert by offering his captors three quintals of gold in ransom. Another Indian, named Tapiawari, uncle to Morequito, and about one hundred years old, was also taken prisoner, and is said to have ransomed himself for one hundred plates of gold, and some green stones which the Spaniards called piedras hijadas (spleen stones, according to Raleigh).

On the 23rd of April, 1593, another Spaniard, Domingo de Vera, prosecuted a voyage of discovery, in

* Hartsink.

† A famous account of the expedition of Berrejo is given by Sir Walter Raleigh, vol. i. p. 195.

the hope of meeting with the supposed splendid capital of the Guianas. Failing as a matter of course in his object, he formally took possession of the whole country in the name of his sovereign, Philip the Second. The following translation from Hartsink embodies the substance of the document which testifies to the act:

"River de Pato, April 23rd, 1593.

"I, Rodrigues de Corança, secretary of marine, hereby testify that Domingo de Vera, lieutenant of Antonio Berrejo, having called his soldiers together, and placed them in battle array, thus addressed them:

"'My friends, you know what pains our General Don Antonio Berrejo has taken, and at what expense he has been during the last eleven years in his endeavours to discover the mighty kingdom of Guiana and El Dorado. It is also not unknown to you how he has suffered under the most extraordinary difficulties during this famous undertaking; now, although in consequence of want of food, and the sickness of his people, this great labour and cost has been useless, he has ordered me to renew this undertaking. On that account, to take possession of Guiana in the name of the king and of our general, I command you, Francisco Carillo, to take up the cross which lays there upon the ground, and to turn it towards the east.'

"Carillo having obeyed this order, the lieutenant and the soldiers threw themselves upon the ground before the cross, and prayed on their knees. After which, Domingo de Vera took a cupful of water and drank it; he then took another cupful and sprinkled it upon the ground, and, drawing his sword, cut down some grass and twigs of trees, saying: 'In the name of God I take possession of this land for Don Philip, our noble sovereign;' upon which all the officers and men again kneeling, answered: 'We will protect this possession with the last drop of

our blood.' After which, Domingo de Vera, with his naked sword in his hand, charged me to proclaim this assumption of territory, and to call upon all present to bear witness to the same.

"Signed, Domingo de Vera, through me, Rodrigues de Corança, secretary."

Besides the foregoing expeditions, a host of other adventurers attempted further enterprises. But there is no further evidence to show that either the Spaniards or Portuguese made additional progress in the possession of Guiana, or built any forts, with the exception of the settlements of the former on the river Orinoco, and of the latter on the Amazon; nor is there any notice in the voyages to these countries, nor any relics to be found, which could lead us to believe that the Spaniards or Portuguese conquered any of the regions between the rivers Orinoco and Amazon, within whose confines were supposed to exist the Golden City and its Silver Lake. The only traces that remain of their presence in the country, are the Portuguese arms rudely carved over the gateway of an abandoned fort, and the names of some Spanish adventurers hewn out on the rocks in the interior.

But before quitting this part of the subject, we must refer briefly to the exploits of some of our own countrymen in this region.

Animated by the same spirit of adventure and inquiry which had been awakened elsewhere by the genius of Columbus, they also despatched vessels in all directions to add to the many triumphs of the sixteenth century.

Pre-eminent among these travellers and heroes was the gifted but unfortunate Sir Walter Raleigh, who, after sending expeditions to the northern continent of America, and founding the colony of Virginia, was sent

to the West Indies in command of a fleet of fifteen large ships to harass the Spaniards, with whom the English were then at war. That part of his enterprise, however, does not concern our narrative.

Sir Walter Raleigh, in his retirement, "having had many years since knowledge by relation of that mighty, rich, and beautiful empire of Guiana, and of that great and golden city which the Spaniards call El Dorado, and the natives Manoa," contemplated a voyage to this country, and on Thursday, February 6th, 1595, set sail in his own ship, accompanied by a small bark of Captain Cross's, besides a small gallego, and arrived at Trinidad on March 22, casting anchor at Point Curiapan, which the Spaniards called Punto de Gallo, situated in 8 deg., or thereabout. After having explored a great part of the island of Trinidad, he attacked St. Joseph, the capital, captured the Governor Berrejo, and set fire to it, at the instigation of the Indians, who had been most cruelly ill-treated by the Spaniards. Being reinforced by Captain George Gifford and Captain Keymis, Raleigh proceeded to Guiana; but the distance (according to report, 600 miles,) being greater than he had anticipated, he concealed the fact from the knowledge of the company, who otherwise would never have been induced to attempt the exploration. "In the bottom of an old gallego, which I caused to be fashioned like a galley, and in one barge, two wherries, and a ship's boat, we carried 100 persons, and their victuals for a month, being all driven to lie in the rain and weather, in the open air, in the burning sun, and upon the boards, and to dress our meat, and to carry all manner of furniture in them; wherewith they were so pestered and unsavoury, that what with victuals, being most fish, with the wet clothes of so many men thrust together, and the heat of the sun, I will undertake there was never any person in England that could be

found more unsavoury and loathsome, especially to myself, who had for many years before been dieted and cared for in sort far different." Being obliged to return from many causes, Sir Walter Raleigh enters into a full account of his travels and of the country, declaring "that whatsoever prince shall possess it, that prince shall be lord of more gold, and of a more beautiful empire, and of more cities and people, than either the King of Spain or the Great Turk"—a singular prophecy, and in part fulfilled.

Raleigh, having listened to the long account given of Guiana by Don Antonio Berrejo, resolved to make a trial to discover it, although urgently dissuaded by the Spaniard, who was hitherto unaware of Raleigh's object in coming hither. On the 22nd of May, after having been surrounded with difficulties in the neighbourhood of the Orinoco, as above noticed, he discovered some Indians, who made him acquainted with the country of Guiana. Having provided a vessel that drew very little water, he explored the coast, and discovered several rivers. He saw birds of all colours, "carnation, crimson, orange, tawny, purple, green, and other sorts, both simple and mixed." After innumerable dangers in ascending some of those wild and hitherto unexplored rivers, he discovered on the fifteenth day the distant mountains of Guiana. On his route he fell in with several tribes of Indians, with whom he entered into friendly relations, accompanying them to their several towns. Having arrived at the river Caroli, he marched overland to view the strange waterfalls, and ascended the hills in the neighbourhood to see the adjacent country. There he heard of a great silver-mine. The following is Raleigh's description of the scene :

"I never saw a more beautiful country, nor more lively prospects: hills so raised here and there over the

valleys, the river winding into divers branches, the plains adjoining without bush or stubble; all fair green grass, the ground of hard sand, easy to march on either for horse or foot; the deer crossing in every path, the birds toward the evening singing on every tree with a thousand several tunes, cranes and herons of white, crimson, and carnation, perching on the river's side, the air fresh with a gentle easterly wind, and every stone that we stooped to take up promised either gold or silver by its complexion."

Some of these stones were believed by the Spaniards at Caraccas to be "el madre del oro," and they affirmed that the mine was further in the ground. On the left of the river Caroli dwelt a tribe of Indians, called Iwarawakesi (enemies to the Epuremie), and adjoining a great lake named Cassipa, reported about forty miles broad, dwelt other tribes, called Cassepagotos, Eparegotos, and Arrawagotos. Beyond Caroli was another river, called Arvi, and next it two other rivers, Atoica and Caora, on which latter inhabited the people called Ewaipanoma, "*whose heads appear not above their shoulders*," which fable, indeed, was generally asserted, and was partly credited by Raleigh, who states that "such a nation was written of by Mandeville many years ago."

To the west of Caroli was met with another river, the Casnero, "falling into the Orinoco, and larger than any in Europe. * * * The winter and summer in these regions, as touching cold and heat, differ not, neither do the trees ever sensibly lose their leaves, but have always fruit either ripe or green, and most of them both blossoms, leaves, ripe fruit, and green at one time." To the north of Caroli was the river Cari, beyond it the river Limo, and between these a nation of cannibals, "in whose chief town, called Acamacaris, is a continual market of women, who were bought by the Arwacas for three or four

hatchets a piece, and sold by them to the West Indies. To the west of Limo were the rivers Pao, Caturi, Voari, and Capuri, a branch of the Meta; and mention is also made of several other rivers and provinces inland."

Raleigh next proceeded to trace the Orinoco toward the sea. He described it as being navigable for ships for nearly 1000 miles, and for smaller vessels nearly 2000 miles, which at the present day is known to be incorrect. The winter or wet season having set in, he departed toward the east, "for no half day passed but the river began to rage and overflow very fearfully, and the rains came down in terrible showers, and gusts in great abundance." Raleigh having arrived at the fort of Morequito, sent for an old Indian, Topiawari, uncle to Morequito, to give further information about the country. This old chief dissuaded him from attempting the city of Manoa for many reasons, relating at the same time marvellous tales about plates and images of gold which abounded among the borderers; but when Raleigh, excited by these stories, urged an immediate attack, the crafty old Indian always prayed him to defer it till next year. Fully persuaded that these riches actually existed, he prudently deferred his attack till a more fitting season; and leaving one Francis Sparrow and a boy, called Hugh Godwin, to make further investigations into the country and language, he took with him a son of the old Indian, as a hostage, and departed on his voyage, carefully exploring the country as he proceeded. He found many beautiful valleys abounding in deer, and lakes full of fish and fowl. In one of these lakes he met with "fishes big as a wine-pipe, which they called manati, and which is most excellent and wholesome meat." The manati is better known now as the sea-cow. Raleigh having descended the Orinoco to where it branched into three great rivers, divided his party, and explored the several

branches, on the borders of one of which, the Winicapora, he discovered a mountain of crystal. "We saw it far off, and it appeared like a white church tower of an exceeding height. There falleth over it a mighty river, which toucheth no part of the side of the mountain, but rusheth over the top of it, and falleth to the ground with a terrible noise and clamour, as if a thousand great balls were knocked one against another." Berrejo, his prisoner, told him that this mountain contained diamonds and other precious stones, the shining light of which might be seen at a great distance. Raleigh having explored several other rivers, or branches of the Orinoco, after numerous dangers and difficulties, at length succeeded in reaching Trinidad, where he had the happiness of meeting his ships, and shortly afterwards proceeded to England. His report of Guiana was most favourable. He represented it as richer than Mexico or Peru, as abounding in all manner "of fish, flesh, and fowl," and states "that for health, good air, pleasure, and riches, I am resolved it cannot be equalled by any region either in the East or West." Out of 100 persons who accompanied him in his romantic and perilous expedition, exposed to all the hardships of human life, such as want of food, raiment, habitation, and rest, and subjected to all the vicissitudes of the weather, and perils both by land and sea, not one died. "The soil," he adds, "is so excellent, and so full of rivers, as it will carry sugar, ginger, and all those commodities which the West Indies hath." To conclude, he adds: "Guiana is a country that hath never yet been sacked, turned, nor wrought. The face of the earth has not been torn, nor the virtue and salt of the soil spent by manurance;" and he winds up his exaggerated description of the country by declaring that among the prophecies in Peru, some of which foretold the loss of the said empire, there was one which affirmed

that from "Inglatierra a nation would come which would subdue the conquerors of the Ingas." He further states: "I had sent Captain Widden, the year before, to get what knowledge he could of Guiana; and the end of my journey at this time was to discover and enter the same. But my intelligence was far from truth; for the country is situate above 600 English miles further from the sea than I was made believe it had been.

"But because there may arise many doubts, and how this empire of Guiana is become so populous, and adorned with so many great cities, towns, temples, and treasures, I thought good to make it known, that the emperor now reigning is descended from those magnificent princes of Peru, of whose large territories, of whose policies, conquests, edifices, and riches, Pedro de Ceizor, Francisco Topz, and others, have written large discourses. For when Francisco Pacaro, Diego Almagro, and others, conquered the said empire of Peru, and had put to death Atabalipa, son to Guaynacapa (which Atabalipa had formerly caused his eldest brother Guascar to be slain), one of the younger sons of Guaynacapa fled out of Peru, and took with him many thousands of those soldiers of the empire called orciones, and with those and many others which followed him, he vanquished all that tract and valley of America which is situate between the great rivers of Amazon and Baraquan, otherwise called Maraquon, and Orinoco.*

"The empire of Guiana is directly east from Peru toward the sea, and lieth under the equinoctial line, and it hath more abundance of gold than any part of Peru, and as many or more great cities than ever Peru had when it flourished most. It is governed by the same laws, and the emperor and people observe the same religion, and the same form and policies in government, as

* Discoverie of Gviana by Sir Walter Raleigh, Knt.

was used in Peru, not differing in any part; and, as I have been assured by such of the Spaniards as have seen Manoa, the imperial city of Guiana, which the Spaniards call El Dorado, for the greatness, the riches, and for the excellent seat, far exceedeth any of the world, at least of so much of the world as is known to the Spanish nation. It is founded upon a lake of salt water of 200 leagues long, like unto Mare Caspium, and if we compare it to that of Peru, and but read the report of Francisco Lopez, and others, it will seem more than credible.

"It seemeth to me that this empire is reserved for her Majesty and the English nation, by reason of the hard success which all these and other Spaniards found in attempting the same." Another strange prophecy.

Sir Walter Raleigh, after his return to England, still brooded over in his mind (already filled with numerous schemes) his "favourite but visionary plan of penetrating into the province of Guiana, where he fondly dreamed of taking possession of inexhaustible wealth, flowing from the richest mines in the New World."* Prevented himself at that time from undertaking the voyage, he sent out Captain Laurens Keymis, in 1596, to pursue the exploration. This navigator carefully traced the several rivers between the Orinoco and the Amazon, and described them in his travels as sixty-seven in number, enumerating also the names of the Indian tribes that inhabited their banks. On the 6th of April, 1596, he arrived at the Orinoco, sailed up that river, passing by two havens, Topamerica and Topiawari, without meeting any Indians, who since the time that they had trafficked with Raleigh, had been driven away by the Spaniards. Keymis returned to England without making any discovery of importance. Nor did any better success attend another expedition, under Captain Masham, in the same

* Robertson, book ix. p. 184.

year. The following is an account of Captain Keymis's expedition:

On Monday, January 26th, 1596, he sailed from Portland Road in the *Darling*, of London, having in company the *Discoverer*, a small pinnace, which parted from them at sea in foul weather the Thursday following, and which they supposed to be lost. Friday, February 13th, fell in with the Canary Islands, and afterwards steered for the islands of Cape Verd. Thence they sailed February 28, and on Sunday the 14th of March descried a low land in the bottom of a bay, the water very smooth but muddy, and the colour red or tawny. They anchored in the mouth of the river Arrowari, a fair and great river, and there explored the country, meeting the following rivers, Arcooa, Wiapoco, Wanari, Caparwacka, Cawo, Caian, Wia, Macuria, Cawroor, and Curassawini. While ascending some of these streams, he met with Indians, and stated to them that he had come only for the purpose of trading with them. These Indians exhibited a friendly disposition, and sought the aid of the English against another nation, the Arwaccas. Keymis procured a guide from the tribe of the Iaos, "who mark themselves with the tooth of an animal, after divers forms," and this man requested to be carried to England, which was done.

In addition to those already mentioned, the following rivers are enumerated by Keymis: Cunanamma, Vracco, Maivari, Mawarparo, Amouna, Marowini, Oncowi, Wiawiami, Aramatappo, Camaiwini, *Shurinama* (now the Surinam), Shurama, Cupanamma, Juana, Guritini, Winitwari, *Berbice*, *Wopari*, *Maicaiwini*, *Mahawaica*, *Wappari*, *Lemdrare*,* *Dessekebe*,* Caopui, *Paurooma*, Moruga, Waini, Barima, Amacur, Aratoori, *Raleana*, or Orinoco. On the 6th April Keymis and his people

* The present rivers of the Demerara and Essequebo.

came to anchor within the mouth of the last-mentioned river, after spending altogether about twenty-three days in discovery upon the coast.

Having made friendship with the Indians, and promising to assist them against the Spaniards, our party were now in a fair way to obtain some authentic information with regard to Guiana. They heard of several towns in the interior, and of a nation of clothed people, called Cassanari, who dwelt close to the place where the river first took the name of Orinoco, and learned that far within they border upon a sea of salt water, named Parime. The famous city of Manoa, or the El Dorado, was reported to be within twenty days' journey from the mouth of the Wiapoco, sixteen from Barima, thirteen from Amacur, and ten from Aratoori.

They were told also, of a race of headless men, with mouths in their breasts, exceedingly wide, called by the Charibes, Chiparemai, and by the Guianians, Ewiapanomos; and hyperbolical descriptions were communicated to them of the wealth of the interior, and of mines of gold, and precious stones.

Having quitted the Orinoco after repeated conferences with several Indian chiefs, they fell in with their long-lost pinnace, the *Discoverer,* which, after parting from them in a storm, had made the land to the southward of Cape Cecil, and had spent three weeks ranging along the coast. The pinnace being found not seaworthy, was burnt, and the party then proceeded to Trinidad, first making the island of Tobago, and afterwards setting sail through the islands to England, which they reached on the 29th June, having spent five months in their voyage.

Writing to Sir Walter Raleigh upon the subject, Captain Keymis urged strongly upon an English government,

the policy of taking possession of Guiana. "England and Guiana conjoined, are stronger and more easily defended than if England alone should repose herself on her own force and powerfulness. For here," says he, "whole shires of fruitful rich grounds, lying now waste, for want of people, do prostitute themselves unto us, like a fair and beautiful woman in the pride and flower of desired grace." And he concludes in this strain: "In one word, the time serveth, the like occasion seldom happeneth in many ages, the former repeated consideration do all jointly together importune us, now or never to make ourselves rich, our posterity happy, our prince every way stronger than our enemies, and to establish our country in a state flourishing and peaceable. Oh, let not then such an indignity rest on us, as to deprave so notable an enterprise with false rumours, and vain suppositions, to sleep in so serious a matter, and renouncing the honour, strength, wealth, and sovereignty of so famous a conquest, to leave all unto the Spaniards."

In the following year, 1597, Raleigh again appeared in the west, under command of the Earl of Essex, but the object of this expedition was rather for plunder, and to annoy the Spaniards (in which they were evidently successful), than with any view to discovery. The following is an account of this voyage to Guiana:

Upon Thursday, October 14th, 1596, the pinnace called the *Wat* departed from Limehouse, but owing to contrary winds, and other accidents, did not get beyond Weymouth before December 27th. On the 25th January, 1597, they made the Canaries, and meeting with several other vessels, both English and French, sailed in company with them to various places; at last, on February 12th, they set sail from Mayo, and stood for the coast of Guiana, and on February the 27th they

made the land, which appeared low, somewhere about Cape Cecil. They next reached the river Wiapoco (about 4 deg. north of the line), and explored it as far as the fall (about sixteen leagues), and found it full of islands, but met no Indians. They then sailed along the coast and traded with the natives. The traffic was principally in tobacco. They passed by the rivers Euracco and Amana, explored the Marawinne, and on the 4th of April reached the falls, having had frequent and friendly intercourse with the Indians. On the 18th April they entered the river Coritine,* and met with a small town, named Warawalle. In this river they also met a bark, called the *John*, of London, with Captain Leigh on board. They were told here, that on a neighbouring river, the *Dessekebe*,† there were lately about 300 Spaniards, but that most of them were now destroyed, or dead. They also learned that this river stretched so far inland as to be within one day's journey of the lake, called Perima, whereupon Manoa was supposed to stand; "and finding that the river Coritine doth meet with Dessekebe up in the land, we made account to go up into the country, to discover a passage unto that rich city."

Accordingly, on the 28th April, a party, composed of about forty men and twenty Indians, proceeded in two shallops and two canoes to explore this passage. They diligently ascended the Coritine, sleeping at night in the woods and visiting several Indian towns, and arrived on the 2nd of May at the falls, over some of which they passed; but here their determination failed them, for learning that there were other falls not passable, and that the Indians higher up would probably oppose their pro-

* The Corentyn.
† The present river Essequebo.

gress, they resolved to abandon the undertaking, although Mr. Masham *yielded divers reasons to the contrary*. On the 4th of May they regained their ships, and a report having reached them that there were ten canoes of Spaniards in the mouth of the Coritine, they made ready for an assault. It appeared afterwards, however, that this was merely a foraging party in search of provisions for the settlers in Orinoco, Marouco, and Dessekebe. They described the river Coritine as about fifty leagues from the mouth to the first falls, crowded with islands, and having three tributary streams and six towns.

Having no further object to detain them, they cleared the river upon Sunday, the 8th of May, and took their course to the West Indies. Passing by St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and Martinique, they arrived at Dominica upon May 13th. Visited Guadaloupe on the 15th, and sailing along Montserrat, Antigua, and Barbadoes, steered across the Atlantic, and arrived at Plymouth on June 28th, without any casualty. The account given of Guiana by Mr. Masham confirmed the favourable evidence of Sir Walter Raleigh. In point of climate they found it temperate and healthy.

"For besides that we lost not a man upon the coast, one that was sick before he came there was nothing sicker for being there, but came home safe—thanks be to God."

The Indians he describes as "tractable and ingenious, and very loving and kind to Englishmen generally."

There was great store of fish and fowl of divers sorts. "Tortoise's flesh plentiful, and tortoise's eggs innumerable; deer, swine, conies, hares, cocks and hens, with potatoes, more than we could spend, besides all kinds of fruits at all times of the year, and the rarest fruits of the world—the pine, the plantain, with other variable and pleasant

things growing to their hands without planting or dressing."

He makes particular mention of Cassari (Cassava), "which, says he, is as good bread as a man need to eat, and better than we can carry any thither." He describes accurately the mode of preparing it, which is the same as that practised at the present time.

With reference to the commodities of the country, he speaks of a species of hemp, of cotton wool, pitch, gums, pepper, &c.; also of parrots, monkeys, and other animals.

Not discouraged by the ill success of the previous voyages, Sir Walter Raleigh, whilst in prison, still cherished his romantic visions about Guiana, and every second year during his imprisonment continued to send vessels thither to encourage the Indians against the Spaniards, and to prepare them for the protection of the English. At length, when liberated from the Tower, in 1616, he made arrangements for a grand expedition—raised about 10,500*l.* by selling his own and his wife's property, and attracted a great number of adventurers by the splendour of his reputation. A commission, dated 26th of August, 1616, was procured from King James through the influence of Sir Ralph Wiwood; but although released from confinement, and holding this commission, Raleigh had not obtained a formal pardon. It is true that a pardon was offered him for 700*l.* by some of the courtiers, but this he refused, strengthened by the opinion of Bacon, who gave him the following advice:

"Sir, the knee timber of your voyage is money; spare your purse in this particular, for upon my life you have a sufficient pardon for all that is past already, the king having, under his broad seal, made you admiral of your fleet, and given you power of the martial law over your officers and soldiers."

Seven months after the date of the commission the following force was ready for sea:

SHIPS.	COMMANDERS.	TONS.	ORDNANCE.
Destiny	Sir Walter Raleigh	440	36
Jason	John Pennington	240	25
Encounter	E. Hasting (aft. Whitney)	160	17
Thunder	Sir Warham Saint Leger	180	20
Flying Joan	John Chidley	120	14
Southampton	John Bayley	80	6
Page	James Barker	25	3

Before this fleet left the English coast, it was augmented by the addition of the undernamed vessels:

VESSELS.	COMMANDERS.
Convertine	Captain Keymis
Confidence	" Wollaston
Flying Hart	Sir John Ferne
Chudlay	——
A fly boat	Samuel King
Another	Robert Smith
A carvel	——

On the 28th March, 1617, Sir Walter Raleigh dropped down the Thames. In the May following, he published his order to the fleet at Plymouth, but it was late in June, or early in July, before he started. The violence of the weather compelled him to put into Cork, where he was detained till late in August. He made the Canaries in September, the Cape de Verd Islands in October, and finally reached the continent of South America in November, after a very bad passage. They made Guiana on the 12th November.

On board of Raleigh's own ship, principally filled with his friends and relations, a great mortality had occurred. Forty-two persons had died on the voyage, as many more were ill, the great commander himself being amongst the sufferers. In a letter to his wife, after expatiating upon all the disasters he had experienced, he concludes in these words:—"To tell you

that I might be here king of the Indians were a vanity. But my name hath still lived among them here. They feed me with fresh meat, and all that the country yields: all offer to obey me."

This letter was dated: "From Caliana, in Guiana, the 14th November." Raleigh remained at the river Caliana until the 4th December, 1617, recruiting his shattered forces, and subsequently despatched five small vessels, under the charge of Captain Keymis, to the Orinoco, to discover the mines. This little squadron had about 250 men in companies of fifty each, under the command of Captains Parker, North, Raleigh (son to Sir Walter), Thornhurst, and Chidley. The remaining vessels of the fleet (five in number, some having deserted,) proceeded to Trinidad to await the result of the expedition against Orinoco, and to watch the Spaniards. The forces under Captain Keymis having landed on the Orinoco, marched up to the town of St. Thomas, which they attacked and captured, but with considerable loss. Amongst others, young Walter Raleigh fell at the head of his company. Captain Keymis, disheartened at the loss of his best troops, relinquished his search for the mines, and after slaying the governor of the El Dorado, Don Diego Palamica, and several of his captains, withdrew from the town and re-embarked his troops. Raleigh's interview with this commander led to a melancholy catastrophe. Keymis, unable to justify his conduct, retired to his cabin and destroyed himself.

Some of the other adventurers under Captains Whitney and Wallaston sailed back to Granada. These circumstances preyed upon the mind of Raleigh. The darling object of his ambition seemed no longer attainable, and after having sacrificed his son, his health, and

his fortune, he left the Guianas for ever, and repaired to England, doomed to end his chivalrous career upon the scaffold.

Perhaps there is no tissue of romantic adventure in the history of human delusions more extraordinary than the narrative of these expeditions. For a period of upwards of one hundred years the belief in a kingdom abounding in gold and silver, whose capital was paved with the precious metals, and outshone the sun with the splendour of its precious stones, continued to dazzle the imaginations of men in all parts of the world, notwithstanding the repeated proofs which the failure of one undertaking after another furnished of the fallacy of their expectations. The "Arabian Nights" hardly contain an enchantment so marvellous as that which was exercised over the adventurous spirits of the sixteenth century by the poetical fables that were circulated of the El Dorado. They sought it in the east on the margin of the Atlantic; they pursued the phantom to the north of the banks of the wild Orinoco; they followed its imaginary track to the west over the mighty Andes, through savage valleys, interminable forests, and perilous swamps, and to the south over the dark waters of the river Negro and the island-studded Amazon; but the land of promise vanished as they approached, and the further they advanced the more hopeless was the pursuit. But disappointments, instead of damping their ardour, fired their determination anew, and accumulated disasters deemed to confirm their faith. Their bones whitened the banks of rivers—successive expeditions perished—and the few survivors who came back to tell the tale, only served to stimulate the delusion their example should have reproved and dispelled.

In this more instructed age we look back with wonder

upon the infatuation that led to so vast an expenditure of energy and capital upon so manifest a chimera; but it is impossible at the same time not to admire the courage and perseverance that were wasted upon its pursuit. The resolution of these desperate adventurers mounted with the difficulties and dangers that surrounded them; the poisoned arrows showered upon them from the ambuscades of the trackless woods—the sickly heats of the climate—the horrors of the rainy season—the pestilent morass—the atmosphere charged with miasma—the earth and the air alive with reptiles and insects more formidable than the human foes through whose possessions they had to pass—were encountered with a fanaticism which nothing short of the thirst of gold could have inspired or sustained.

The vision of the Golden City has now faded in the awakening light of knowledge. It has been reserved for a distinguished philosopher of the present age to submit the delusion to the test of science, and dissipate the gorgeous phantasy for ever.

"In the universal search for El Dorado, two places appear more particularly to have attracted general attention—viz., the regions along the eastern slope of the Andes of Candinamarca (New Granada), which have been considered as the birthplace of the fiction, and that part of Guiana which lies between the rivers Rupununi and Branco. A large inland lake, another Caspian Sea, as Raleigh expressed himself, was the constant companion of the golden city. Whether or no this locality referred to the Andes south of Mexico, or to Guiana, we find it surrounded by water. Thus when the space where El Dorado was situated was supposed to be in Guiana, the name of the river Parima, and the inundations to which the flat country or savannahs were

subjected, through which the rivers Parima, Takutu, Xurumu, Maku, and Rupununi take their course, gave rise to the fable of the White Sea, or Laguna del Parima, or Rupununi. Captain Keymis, who, at the expense of Raleigh, undertook a second voyage to Guiana, identified the locality of Dorado with this lake, which, as he imagined, contained the town of Manâo; and Humboldt, after fully examining into the subject of the lake Parima, proved that it no longer existed. Its erasure from the maps put an end to the long and painful illusion of the El Dorado."

CHAPTER III.

AGE OF CHIVALRY PASSED AWAY—SETTLEMENTS OF THE DUTCH, 1580—TRADING COMPANY TO GUIANA IN 1602—ENGLISH ATTEMPTS AT COLONISATION IN 1604-5, 6, AND 8—ORIGIN OF FRENCH GUIANA—ORIGIN OF DUTCH GUIANA—SETTLEMENTS AT KYK-OVER-AL, 1613—POSTS ON THE RIVER ESSEQUEBO, 1614—THE SEVEN UNITED PROVINCES—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DUTCH WEST INDIA COMPANY, 1621—INTRODUCTION OF SLAVES—ORIGIN OF THE SLAVE-TRADE—SETTLEMENT ON THE RIVER BERBICE, 1626—APPOINTMENT OF DUTCH COMMISSIONERS—SETTLEMENTS ATTACKED BY ENGLISH AND FRENCH—FIRST COMMANDERS ON THE ESSEQUEBO—BOUNDARIES OF DISTRICTS SETTLED—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW GENERAL DUTCH WEST INDIA COMPANY—TRANSFER OF SETTLEMENTS ON THE RIVER BERBICE TO A VAN PEERE, 1678—SUCCESS OF THE DUTCH—MODE OF LIFE OF THE EARLY PLANTERS.

THE age of chivalry and romance in British Guiana passed away with the adventurers of the sixteenth century, never to return. To the ardent and sanguine Spaniard, succeeded the methodical and unimaginative Dutchman, who, accustomed in his own country to the difficulties of a flat and marshy land, settled down in contentment upon the undrained banks of the rivers and sea-coasts, leaving to more credulous and speculative individuals the task of exploring the interior of a country enveloped in mystery and marvels. It has been already shown that the several adventurers from Spain, Portugal, England, and France, although ransacking the country in quest of the treasures it was supposed to contain, left little behind them but the history of their misfortunes and disappointment. The

Spaniards, more particularly, furnished such an example; for although they had long lingered on the "Wild Coast," as Guiana was then denominated, yet they were eventually all driven away, or murdered by the Indians; so that about the end of the sixteenth century they held scarcely a rood of land in this territory.

It has been already noticed that in 1580 the Dutch, under the direction of some Zealand merchants, had commenced a settlement on the banks of the river Pomeroon and at the mouth of the river Essequebo,* from which latter, however, in 1596, they were driven away by the Spaniards and Indians. With the pertinacity, however, peculiar to their character and nation, they did not abandon their object, but proceeded further up this noble river, and, under commander Joost Van der Hoog, effected a settlement on a small island called Kykoveral, situated at the confluence of two tributary streams—viz., the river Cayuni and the river Mazaruni, which will be shortly noticed.

In 1599 another Dutchman, named Adrian Hendricks, an influential inhabitant and burgomaster of Middleburg, sent two ships to the same coast, and asked for sixteen competent soldiers for each vessel from the state of Zealand, knowing the dangerous condition of traffic at that time. Other attempts at settlements were made about the same time from Vlissingen. Whilst these movements were in progress, two forts which the settlers had erected on the Amazon were destroyed by the Portuguese.

Some Zealand merchants shortly afterwards sent an expedition, under the command of Ryk Henderzoon, for the purpose of trade, and to establish a settlement on the

* A settlement formerly existed at Cartabo Point, the tongue of land situated at the confluence of the rivers Mazaruni and Cayuni, tributaries of the river Essequebo.

same coast. The names of these merchants were Van Peeren, Van Rhee, De Moor, De Lampsins, De Vries, and De Hovin. Freedom of convoy was granted to them by the States-General in 1602. Their endeavours to proceed up the river Orinoco were, however, prevented by the Spaniards, who then occupied the neighbourhood of that river.

It would appear also that the English (who had at one time indulged in the same sanguine expectations that had fascinated the Spaniards), profiting by the disastrous results of mere speculative theories, now began to emulate the more sober efforts of the Dutch at colonisation, and actually endeavoured to settle on the coast. In the year 1604, Captain Charles Leigh attempted to plant a colony in Guiana. Leaving England on March 21st, he arrived with his ship, the *Olive Plant,* and forty-six people, at the river Wiapoco (a tributary of the river Orinoco), which he called Caroleigh (May 22nd). He was here well received by the Indians (the Iokos, Armakos, and Sapayos), whom he assisted in their wars with the Caribs. He commenced a settlement near a hill, which he called Oliphe; but the people getting dissatisfied at his selection of a locality, he removed to another hill named Huntly, about two miles westward of the river Caroleigh, calling the settlement Principium, and the hill Howard. Here he waited for reinforcements, which, unfortunately, never arrived. The expected force under Captains Calolone and Nicholas St. John, in the ship *Olive Blossom,* left Woolwich in May, 1605; but, in consequence of adverse winds, went first to Barbadoes, and afterwards to St. Lucia, where they attempted to settle, but were for the most part murdered by the Carib Indians, who had not yet been driven from their fastnesses.* A few, however, escaped, and proceeded to the Caraccas.

* Breen's St. Lucia, p. 45.

In the following year, 1606, Captain Edward Hartley sailed in his vessel, the *Sea Phœnix*, with thirty people and some merchandise to the coast of Guiana. In the course of their cruise they were fortunate enough to meet with Captain Leigh and some of his people; but the information derived from them was not of an encouraging description. The majority of the settlers had suffered severely from the climate and other unlooked-for hardships. Many had died; and Captain Leigh himself, with several others, perished soon after. The *Sea Phœnix* did not remain long in the neighbourhood; yet, in spite of the accounts which they had received, thirty-five people maintained their struggling colony under the command of Richard Lacksia, only, however, to experience in the end the same calamities that had befallen the rest of their countrymen. In a short time many of them died, and at last, Lacksia himself, with fourteen others, gladly seized upon a favourable opportunity, and set sail in some Zealand vessels bound for Middleburg. Another attempt to form a British colony in this neighbourhood terminated still more disastrously. In the year 1608 an expedition, under Commander Harcourt, with thirty people, reached the coast, and settled in the Indian village Caripa, on the river Wiapoco. Nothing more is known of the issue of the undertaking; but little doubt can be entertained as to its fate. Had they succeeded, they must have left some trace behind them, or some account would have come down to us of their proceedings. The probability is, that they perished under the hands of the natives.

Nor was the attempt made at a later period by Captain Marshall and sixty people, to settle in a neighbouring river, the Surinam, attended by much more prosperous results. They erected a small building about ten miles up that river, and also established a fort some sixteen miles further on, with the intention of cultivating to-

bacco. They had at first settled on a small river, the little Coma—the present river Comowini, or Commewyne; but being molested in this place, they proceeded to the great river Coma, now known as the Surinam. When they first landed, a large Indian village, called Paramaribo (Flower-garden), had been abandoned and destroyed by the natives. This village the English rebuilt; but finding themselves harassed by the Indians, and suffering severely from the insalubrity of the climate, they finally abandoned their project. This occurred from the year 1626 to 1630. Ten years afterwards the French invested the evacuated settlement of Paramaribo, but relinquished it for the same reasons as the English. The French settlers, however, proceeded to Cayenne, and there founded what is now known as French Guiana. The origin of the present Dutch Guiana is curious, and deserves, perhaps, in this place a passing notice, although somewhat irrelevant to the immediate subject of our narrative.

In 1652 a body of English settlers again arrived at Paramaribo, and being now freed from the molestation of the Caribbee Indians, who had removed from Warrica to the Coponam, at length succeeded in establishing a settlement. The infant colony prospered, and in 1662 was granted by Charles II. of England to Lord Willoughby, at that time governor of Barbadoes, who changed the Indian name of the river Coma, into Surryham, in honour of the Earl of Surrey, which in the course of time became converted into Surinam. The British Crown afterwards bought this colony from the heirs of Lord Willoughby, and exchanged it with the Dutch Government in 1669 for New Holland, in North America—the present republican city of New York. Thus is the French adage, "L'homme propose, Dieu dispose," verified in these singular events.

It has been shown that at the end of the sixteenth century, in 1580, the Dutch had already effected a settlement near the river Essequebo, and that in the attempt to establish themselves further upon its west coast, they had been driven away by the Spaniards. In 1613 this little colony had made considerable progress, for in addition to the settlement of New Zealand, held by Commander Joost Van der Hoog, that officer had taken possession of a small island at the confluence of the two great tributary streams the Cayuni and the Mazaruni. He found here the remains of an old fort, built of hewn stone (van klipsteen gebouwd*), with the arms of the Portuguese nation carved over the gateway; but when, or by whom erected, is unknown. To this fort he gave his own name, and the island, from its commanding position, was termed by the Dutch "Kyk over al," literally "See over all." For many years this fort was held for the purpose of defence, but subsequently, in 1764, was destroyed, and part of the hewn stones were used in the erection of a sugar-mill on the Dutch Company's plantation, the Duinenberg, the remainder being similarly employed in 1768 on another plantation, the Lucksbergen. In course of time two churches were built, one at Postampa, erected at the cost of the inhabitants, and the other, or company's church, on Fort Island; and a predicant, or preacher, was appointed, at the joint expense of the inhabitants and the company. These arrangements were followed up in 1614 by a general declaration issued by the Government of Zealand (one of the seven United Provinces), granting free trade to certain persons, to the exclusion of all others, who should undertake to explore and navigate the several rivers, havens, and creeks of this country.

It must be borne in mind, in reading the account of

* Hartsink

the subsequent events, that the condition of the Dutch nation at this period was very different from its present constitution.

On the 15th of January, 1579, seven Protestant provinces of the Netherlands, then governed by Philip II., successor to the famous Charles V., threw off the yoke of Spain, and deputies from Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Friesland, or Vlissingen, Goningen, Overyssel, and Guilderland, the seven provinces, met at Utrecht, and signed the famous Union, to all appearance so slight, but in reality so solid, whereby these provinces, hitherto independent of each other, and actuated by different interests, became as closely connected by the great tie of liberty as the bundle of arrows, the arms and emblem of their republic.

It was agreed that they should unite under one government, each province and city reserving to itself all its own privileges, rights, customs, and statutes; that in all disputes between particular provinces, the rest should interpose only as mediators; and that they should assist each other with life and fortune against every hostile attempt upon any single province. Their motto was "Incertum quo fata ferant," and they adopted for a device on their coin a ship struggling amid the waves, unassisted by sails or oars. The republic had for their rulers, or stadtholders, the princes of the House of Orange.

In 1621 the Dutch West India Company was established, with exclusive control over all the settlements of their nation on the Wild Coast, and also the trade thither. The cultivation of land must already have been in active progress, for reports from the infant colony represented it to be in a flourishing condition; and the abundant fertility of the soil being appreciated, the means only were wanting to carry out the full development of its

resources. Who can contemplate without excitement, the position of the early planters, and the thoughts which must have crowded into their minds, when they found themselves masters of a land teeming on all sides with unbounded natural wealth, and reaching as far as the eye could strain; under the genial influence of perpetual summer? How eager must have been their desires! how jealous their views! how ambitious their enterprising projects! Wealth was before them, but how could they obtain it? Opulence was scattered around them, but how could they collect it? The broad stream had to be crossed, the tall forests levelled, and unprofitable verdure made to give way to more useful culture. The Dutch Government was not backward in aiding the early efforts of the colonists; aware of the advantages which would accrue to their country, and already skilled in colonisation by their rising possessions in the east, they undertook to supply the colonist with the cheapest labour. A company was accordingly formed in 1621, and a monopoly granted to them, for the purpose of introducing *negro slaves* from Africa into their possessions in Guiana.

It is unnecessary in this work to enter at any length into the origin and history of the *slave-trade*. This abominable traffic was introduced so early as the year 1442, to a civilised world, by the Portuguese, who, under the encouragement of their celebrated Prince Henry, were exploring the coast of Africa. About that time, Antonio Gonzalves had seized some Moors near Cape Bajador, but was ordered by the prince to carry them back to their country; he accordingly landed them at the Rio del Oro, and received from the Moors in exchange, ten blacks, and a quantity of gold dust, with which he returned to Lisbon. Stimulated by the prospect of gain which this adventure opened up, his

countrymen were not slow in following his footsteps, and through succeeding years, a number of vessels were fitted out for the same profitable traffic; forts for the protection of this novel trade were erected on the coast of Africa, and the King of Portugal, in addition to his Christian titles, assumed that of "Lord of Guinea."

The Spaniards in 1502, urged on by the avarice and recklessness which in this age characterised their proceedings, greedily entered into the necessary and cruel traffic, and finding the aboriginal inhabitants of the newly-discovered countries too indolent and refractory to assist them in their gold-seeking pursuits, they naturally fell into the tempting project of importing negro slaves for the purpose of labour, but especially for working the mines of the auriferous regions. Hence, in a few years, it became an established and regular branch of commerce. Among other nations, the English did not hesitate to follow the same lucrative trade, for in the records of naval history collected by the famous Hakluyt, particular mention is made of the celebrated "John Hawkins," who afterwards received from Queen Elizabeth the honour of knighthood, and was subsequently made treasurer of the navy. This fortunate captain, says Hakluyt, hearing "that negroes were very good merchandise in Hispaniola, and that store of negroes might easily be had on the Coast of Guinea, he resolved to make trial thereof, and communicated that device with his worshipful friends of London, Sir Lionel Ducket, Sir Thomas Lodge, Master Gemson (his father-in-law), Sir William Winter, Master Bromfield, and others; all which persons *liked so well* of his intention, that they became liberal contributors, and adventurers in the action; for which purpose there were three good ships immediately provided, the *Solomon* of 120 tunnes, wherein Master Hawkins went himself, as general; the

Swallow of 100 tunnes, and the *Jonas*, a bark of 40 tunnes; in which small fleete Master Hawkins took with him 100 men."

He sailed from England for Sierra Leone, in October, 1562, and in a short time after his arrival on the coast, got into his possession, partly by the sword, and partly by other means, about 300 negroes, besides sundry merchandise, with which he proceeded to Hispaniola; and touching at different posts in that island, disposed of the whole of his cargo, in exchange for hides, ginger, *sugar*, and some pearls. He returned to England in September, 1563, after a voyage which had been productive of great profit to the adventurers.* In the following year he undertook another voyage, in which we need not follow him further than to state that, upon this occasion, he was appointed to one of the queen's ships, *Iezus*, of 700 tons; the avarice and cupidity of the British Government being excited by the successful issue of his former expedition. The implied sanction, if not the direct protection and support of Great Britain, was thus given to the slave-trade.

The French nation was also found engaged in a similar traffic, and lastly the Dutch, in the seventeenth century, formally entered upon the heartless, but profitable speculation. The shores of Guiana were perhaps the first territories to which the miserable steps of the captured Africans were directed by their Dutch masters. It was not long before the evidence of the new labour-power was made manifest; the impassable bush was cleared from the land; the soil was tolerably drained of its superabundant moisture; and the fruitful earth, so long undisturbed, was awakened to a new life, and made to give birth to a race of exotic plants, brought to maturity by the skill and industry of man.

* Edwards, p. 48.

The cotton, the coffee, and the sugar-cane, introduced at different periods, into the teeming soil, were reared in such vigour and luxuriance, as to render the name of Guiana familiar in after-times to the whole of Europe. Few people, except the enterprising Dutch, could have seriously entertained the design of establishing extensive cultivation so near to the coast of the Atlantic, and the inundated banks of these rivers. But accustomed in their own country to wrestle with the difficulties of a marshy land, and to defy the encroachment of the seas, they did not hesitate to occupy the muddy shores, and to protect themselves by artificial means from the encroachment of the waves; possibly, also, to rob the waters of their natural boundaries. At first, they were more or less compelled to cultivate the lands up the river, from apprehension of the buccaneers, who occasionally did them the honour of depriving them of the profit of years. But gradually they became bolder, and approached nearer the mouth of the river. This movement was adopted partly for the general purposes of commerce and military strength, and partly to obtain increased shipping facilities, having found it necessary in their early shipments to employ vessels of war in escorting the loaded barks out to sea, beyond the reach of the marauding privateers that cruised about the coast. At the present time, it appears almost incredible that the Dutch should have carried their cultivation so high up the Essequebo, and so far inland. It is asserted by Dr. Hancock, that not many years ago a coffee-field existed at Ooropocary, about forty leagues inland, which had been planted at some unknown period; and the same writer adds, in exemplification of the wonderful fertility of the soil, that the trees were still actually bearing fruit in abundance, "nature alone keeping up the reproduction." It is also evident from the reports of travellers,

that numerous posts, established by the Dutch, are still to be met with on the Essequebo, very far inland.

In 1626, Jan Van Peere, a native of Flushing, who with other settlers had been driven away from the river Orinoco, proceeded to the river Berbice, and commenced to cultivate its banks. His efforts were crowned with success, for in 1627, at a meeting of the West India Company of Holland, or rather of the republic of the seven provinces, a resolution was passed forbidding any one to trade to the coast of Guiana from the Pomeroon to the Corentyn without permission from the said company or from the said Van Peere, who had become a kind of proprietor of the lands in cultivation in Berbice. The company also declared the African slave-trade to this coast to be free, but reserved to themselves the exclusive supply of such settlements as already existed—viz., Surinam, Essequebo, and Berbice.

St. Andries was a fort built subsequently on the east of the river Berbice, about 100 roods from its mouth, opposite Crab Island. This fort was called Andries after the then governor, Johan Andries Lossner, and was built of brick, fortified with twelve cannon, having a paling four feet high, with a ditch or moat outside. In 1746 there were twenty-five men here, under a lieutenant and other officers; but the soldiers deserted, and the fort was pulled down, a stone house built in its place, occupied by a sergeant and five or six men, with a cannon, to establish signals with the settlements; a redoubt and posts were constructed more inland, but were afterwards abandoned. The Redoubt Samson, several miles up on the east bank of the river Berbice, was a bulwark made of earth, afterwards changed into a brick house, with several cannon for protection.

About fifty miles further up, in a direct line, was Fort Nassau, for many years the site of the little capital of

that river. It was occupied by the governor and principal colonists, and was protected by palisades ten feet high, and several cannon. In the interior was a church and a brick building, used as a council-house and governor's residence; the under part was employed as a guard-house and magazine. At the distance of a cannon-shot from Fort Nassau was New Amsterdam, which consisted at first of about twenty scattered houses, with a Lutheran church and minister's house. On the other side of the river a Dutch Reformed church was built at the mouth of the river Waironi, as well as a redoubt or fort, and another small Lutheran church higher up. A fortress, called Zeelandia, was constructed about fifty miles up the river, but was subsequently abandoned.

Acting upon the same principles as their fellow-countrymen on the Essequebo, the colonists of Berbice proceeded to lay out plantations, to form draining and navigation canals, and to raise up dykes, or, as they were afterwards called, dams. The increasing success of these two infant colonies induced numerous persons to flock to them, and led others to attempt similar expeditions elsewhere. A ship, called the *King David*, with fourteen pieces of cannon, twenty-five sailors, and thirty passengers, under the command of Captain David Pietre de Vries, sailed from Texel on the 10th of July, 1634, and proceeded first to Cayenne, which they found settled by the English. They in consequence directed their course to the island Meconia, between the rivers Cayenne and Wia, where they disembarked, and colonising its banks, endeavoured to cultivate tobacco, orlians,* and cotton. In this neighbourhood they met with another body of Dutch settlers, under Claude Prevost, who had arrived

* The orliana-tree, as it was called by the Dutch, yielded the Rocou, or Arnotto dye, which became an article of commerce, and has been used to colour cheese. It is the produce of the Bixa Orellana (ord. Flacourtiacea).

on the island two years before. The new planters likewise discovered the ruins of an old castle, built by the French, on a hill, which they took care to repair for their own protection, and to prevent the approach of hostile ships. Two wells were found sunk within the castle. Moreover, some English and Zealanders were fallen in with, employed in cultivating tobacco and other produce; and such was the extent of the cultivation that had been previously carried on at this place, that they reported having found between 80,000 and 100,000 tobacco-plants, the same number of cotton-trees, and some wild specimens of the sugar-cane, whose stems were as thick as a man's arm!

Captain De Vries left this island on the 14th of October in the same year, taking with him the grandson of a Caribbean chief, named Awaricary, who was anxious to see Europe. Sailing to the river Sinamari, he fell in with twelve French settlers, cultivating pimento and pepper. These people were under the command of an officer named Chambin, and had been here about three years. Visiting next the river Anama, and Marowini, Captain De Vries found them inhabited by Arrawak and Caribbee Indians; on the last river he met with some Dutch settlers. Proceeding subsequently to the Surinam, he saw Captain Marshall and his English settlers. Quitting this river, he passed the Berbice and Demerara, leaving at the latter stream some Indians who had accompanied him from Surinam, and at length reached the settlements at the Essequebo, where he joined the commander, Jan Van der Goss. This governor seriously entertained the idea of the existence of gold mines in the neighbourhood, and actually sent proposals to the West India Company relative to the exploring of such on the Orińoco.

It was very natural that in such new countries the thoughts even of the practical Dutchman should be

diverted by the prospect of finding gold in some shape or other; for in spite of the prospects held out to them by the exuberant richness of the soil, they had many difficulties of no ordinary kind to contend against in its cultivation. The climate was damp, relaxing, and aguish; the land was overrun with creeping plants; the animals and insects were intolerable; and the distance from home occasioned the greatest inconveniences. A few of the necessaries of life could indeed be procured in their adopted land; but their luxuries, and many of their habitual wants, had still to be supplied from an European source, at a distance of about 4000 miles. They bore their hardships with the greatest fortitude and patience, and encountered their difficulties with composure if not cheerfulness; but as yet the produce of the soil was not of a very lucrative nature, and the mere exportation of such articles as tobacco, pepper, pimento, dye-stuffs, and cotton, had not attracted much notice in Europe; indeed, they had made so slight an impression, that in the year 1657 the first Dutch General West India Company, in consequence of recent losses in the Brazils and other causes, were disinclined to take much interest in them, and in the October of that year the management of the settlement in Essequebo was entrusted to a commission of eight persons—viz., two from Middleburg, one from Vlissingen, one from Veere, and four from the Chamber of Zealand, which last had endeavoured to organise the scanty possession on the Essequebo by establishing plantations and introducing more negro labour. The two posts at Pomeroon and Morocco were accordingly settled anew, and the villages or towns of New Zealand and New Middleburg were erected on the banks of these rivers.

The commissioners on behalf of these cities in the Netherlands, which they represented, had the exclusive right of trading to these new settlements on condition of

defraying all the charges of the civil and military establishments; but the evils of war interfered soon after with their new arrangements; the administration of Essequebo was handed over to the Kamer Zealand, or West India Company of the Chamber of Zealand.

At the beginning of the war in the year 1665, an English vessel of ten or twelve guns attacked Fort Nassau, and was repulsed. But in the following year, 1666, an English fleet, under Meyer John Schot, furnished by the governor of Barbadoes and some of the other islands, attacked this colony, and compelled the Dutch to capitulate; furthermore, the French, with whom they were also at war, visited the settlements on the Essequebo, and plundered them, but could not take the fort; so that the commander of Berbice, at that time Matthys Bergenaar, with a few of the settlers, besides a company of negroes and some runaways, proceeded to the rescue of Fort Nassau which had been attacked, and compelled the invaders to withdraw. This was in 1667, when the peace of Buda restored a temporary tranquillity to these shores. The general command was then given to Commander Crynsse, who left the Ensign Baarlaid in charge of the Essequebo, and Commander Saal in charge of the Morocco, but who was succeeded in 1670 by Hendrich Roll, appointed by the Kamer Zealand as Commander of Essequebo.

Not long after the peace, or about 1669, a serious proposition was made by Frederick Casimir, Count of Hanover, through his privy councillor, Raad Jan Joachim Bekker, to the General West India Company, into whose hands the management of the colony had again fallen under certain conditions confirmed by the States-General. The proposition of Count Hanover was, that a *German* colony, with the consent of the Company, should be formed on the "Wild Coast" of America, between the

Orinoco and the Amazon. This proposal was at once agreed to, and an agreement to the following effect entered into between the parties:—"That the extent of land to be granted should be about 30 miles broad and 100 deep inland, and to be at least six miles from any of the Dutch settlements. That the land so given should be cultivated within twelve years of the grant. That the land should be held as a lien, the count to consider himself as a vassal to the company, giving and receiving assistance. That such land be liable to transfer to children, or other heirs, but that with every transfer a charge of liege money (Heergewaaden) was to be paid—say 5000 lbs. of *sugar*, or 100 ducats. That the company should be bound to maintain and support the rights of the count. That the count should possess sole right over the political, judicial, and military affairs, appeal in certain cases being permitted to be made to the company. That the practice of all kinds of religion should be allowed. That the navigation should be confined to the Netherlands; all 'materiel' and goods to come from that country, and all articles of produce shipped to go there. That *if* any negro slaves should be required, the West India Company should reserve the right of selling them at such rates and on such terms as they were in the habit of doing elsewhere," &c. This carefully concocted scheme, however, was never carried into effect. The same destiny attended a similar proposal made some years after by Camerling.

On the first attempts at settlement, whether on the Essequebo or the Berbice, little attention had been paid by those in charge to their several limits or boundaries; but as the inhabitants increased in number, and as cultivation in each district was followed up with some degree of success, it became necessary to draw the line of demarcation between two such spreading "land streeken," as the

Dutch termed them. The necessity for this arrangement was obvious; for although colonised by individuals of the same nation, yet each colony maintained its separate rights and privileges, and was superintended by a separate commander. To benefit, therefore, the present occupiers of land, and to avoid future litigation, the governor of Essequebo, Hendrich Roll, who had been appointed by the West India Company in 1670, and the Secretary of Berbice, Van Berckel, agreed, in the year 1672, that the boundary line between Berbice and the Essequebo (including in the latter the unsettled river of Demerara) should be the small river Abary, which, arising in a hilly district about the 6th degree of north latitude, runs in a northerly direction towards the Atlantic Ocean, into which, after a course of about fifty miles, it discharges itself. Like most of the other rivers of similar size, this stream was called by the Dutch the Kreek Abari, afterwards translated into English the Creek Abari, which name it retains to the present day.

It was, perhaps, from the greater attention paid by the Dutch to the very large rivers of this new country, or to the contrast which they presented to the smaller ones, that the term "kreek" became applied to so many of the streams in Guiana; for it requires very little geographical knowledge to distinguish between a mere inlet of the sea, and the termination of a bed of water which has its origin inland.

In 1673 a rebellion of the troops broke out, caused by Constapel Dirk Rosenkrans, who was dissatisfied with the diminution of the rations. Owing to the war, no ship had arrived for seventeen months, the one expected, the *Eendracht*, being intercepted by the English. This Rosenkrans put the commander of the troops in prison. In 1674, two ships arrived bringing a new commander for a year, who liberated the former one, and sent him home.

The boundaries being settled, the administration of the Government of Essequebo devolved into the hands of a new General West India Company, which was established in 1674, the first company having been dissolved. The Chamber of Zealand, however, was still allowed a certain control over the colony, and even an exclusive right of trade with it, which continued till 1770, when the trade was partially thrown open to the other provinces also.

The company appointed an assembly of ten persons to conduct its business, and the colony was presided over locally by an officer or commander, Hendrich Roll, with a small salary, who, assisted by a few of the leading settlers, conducted the trifling judicial, civil, and political business of the settlement. Thus early the elements of a social community began to be developed—so instinctively does man in a civilised state, turn to society for happiness and security.

It has been asserted by a celebrated writer, Hobbes, "that out of society we are defended only by our single strength, in society, by the strength of all. Out of society no man is sure to keep possession of what his industry has gained; in society, every body is secure from that danger. To conclude, out of society we have the tyranny of passion, war, fear, poverty, filthiness, barbarity, ignorance, and wildness; in society we have the sway of reason, peace, security, riches, decency of ornament, company, elegancy, knowledge, and benevolence."

This quaint exposition of the advantages of a social state has, however, been attacked by criticism, and with good reason, since the blessings enumerated do not invariably follow in society, nor are the evils of an opposite state always to be avoided. The reader, in following up the progress of this history, will probably discover cause for dissenting from the unqualified praise

bestowed on the advantages of the social compact by our learned countryman. Such as it was, however, something approaching to an organised social state began now to be displayed in the infant colony. The Assembly of Ten, alluded to, allowed the Chamber of Zealand, who were more particularly interested in the progress of the Essequebo settlements, to furnish equipments for their military protection, reserving to themselves the right of appointing directors and commanders. They nominated Jacob Hars commander, who was succeeded, in 1678, by Commander Abraham Beckman. The colony of Berbice was under a similar superintendence, and was included in the charter of the West India Company; but in the year 1678, a fresh arrangement was entered into between this company and Abraham Van Peere, magistrate and counsellor of Vlissingen, whose ancestor, Jean Van Peere, as before explained, first managed it about fifty years before.

The following is an extract from the register of the resolution of the directors of the West India Company and the Assembly of Ten:—"Article and condition whereby the gentlemen directors (a committee of the respective Chambers of the General West India Company of the United States), under authority of their High Mightinesses of the States-General, give over a lien to Abraham Van Peere on the colony named Berbice. This colony, with all its appurtenances, to be made over to him under certain conditions. The above Van Peere, his lien, &c., to continue its administration, civil, political, and social as before. To contract alliances, &c., under name and authority of their High Mightinesses and company, and to erect fortresses, &c., for its defence and protection. Ships sent to the colony to be reported to the company, and to take out an act of commission."

By the transfer thus made of this colony, and afterwards renewed in 1703, Abraham Van Peere became in a manner proprietor of the soil.

Supplied as they were with the rudiments of authority, capital, and labour, the two infant colonies, stimulated by an increasing demand for the products of their industry, contrived by their existence to signalise the triumph of the Dutch, and stamp with some celebrity the close of the seventeenth century; but comparing small things with great, it is curious to notice the value of colonial appointments at this period. The first commander of any note in Berbice, was Herr Lucas Condrio, who arrived in 1684, and contributed greatly to the prosperity of the colony. He improved Fort Nassau, and proceeding as a captain to Surinam in 1689, was killed by the French.

The Assembly of Ten having appointed J. P. De Yonge commander of Essequebo in 1680 or 1686, his salary was fixed at 50 florins per month (about 6*l.*), which was just double what his predecessor, Abraham Beckman, received in 1681; but this sum was protested against by the colonists as an intolerable burden, although it failed to satisfy the ambition of the next commander, Samuel Beckman (appointed November 2, 1690), who in 1695 formally applied for an increase. This year is also memorable for two other reasons—1st. That an application was made for the appointment of a predikant, or clergyman, indicating clearly that up to this period no such functionary existed in Essequebo, and also that some occasion or other led to the declared want of such an acquisition to the social elements; 2nd. That the want of shipping was felt so generally, that application was actually made for leave to send produce by way of Surinam, showing indisputably that the settlers were not idle, or inattentive to their interests, but had already

employed the land to some advantage in the cultivation of tobacco, orlians, cotton, and perhaps sugar. Hence it is clear that at the close of the seventeenth century the persevering natives of the seven united provinces had succeeded in their endeavours to colonise this land. How different the pursuits in which they engaged to those so ardently followed by their predecessors of the sixteenth century! How different the result! The Spaniard, in his thirst for gold, sought an imaginary treasure —the Dutchman contented himself with the culture of the soil. The former wasted his resources and lost his life—the latter lived to enjoy some reward for his efforts. The Spaniard, led by his imagination, explored, amid difficulties and dangers, the far interior, and found a "bourne from whence no traveller returns"—the Dutchman, guided by experience, possessed himself of "things that lie free for any taker." The one grasped at a shadow, the other seized the substance. In military pomp, and pride, and discipline, the adventurer of Spain sought combat with the sword against aborigines, rude countrymen, without laws or government, free and unrestrained, and thought to wrest a golden prize from their simple hands; the settler from Holland held out the olive-branch to the actual proprietor of the land, whilst at the same time he firmly planted himself on the banks of the rivers and on the sea-coasts. The name of the one became a byword to after nations, and left no trace of greatness or wisdom; the character of the other is still indelibly stamped upon the land, and the genius of the Dutch, as demonstrated by their canals, bridges, drainage, policy, and laws, remains to the present time to illuminate the epoch of their lives.

The investment of large sums of money in the cultivation of property had drawn to this country many men of

tolerable rank and education, who, with the intelligence peculiar to speculators, had prospered in the land, and surrounded by their dependents and slaves, revived in a manner the feudal system of bygone years. Like to the barons of former Europe, the lordly planters of America enacted in the New World scenes similar to those which had nearly been abolished in the civilised parts of Europe. Revelling themselves in luxury and riches, they exacted the most harassing duties from their slaves or vassals, who were made to toil for the advantage, the ease, and the prosperity of their masters. If, unlike the serfs of old, they were exempt from military service, it was simply because no such service was necessary for defence or aggrandisement. The planter lived in a spacious house, in the enjoyment of every comfort that wealth could procure; he was flattered by dependents, who courted his good-will; his equals or neighbours exchanged with him the most friendly acts of hospitality. Aroused at early morn by his attendants, he sipped his cup of coffee; a short toilet followed, during which his nerves were fortified by a glass or two of genuine schiedam by way of an "antifogmatic," a custom ridiculed by the uninitiated, but defensible, nevertheless, as a very prudent and salutary protection against the injurious effects of the morning miasm. A wide straw hat, a nankeen or linen suit, comprised the chief articles of his dress. Having held a parley, or rather "levée," with his assistants or overseers, he sallied forth on horseback, followed by a running footboy or page, armed with the pouch of tobacco or cigars, perhaps having again applied to the "gin-flask," to make precaution "doubly sure." His equestrian tour was round the plantation, along its wide and grassy paths, where his quick eye detected all errors of "omission and commission." After a careful

inspection, and having given necessary orders for the day, he leisurely returned home to an elaborate breakfast—a regular "déjeûner à la fourchette," where fish, hams, sausages, pepperpot, cheese, formed the staple articles. Tea was considered too "bilious," coffee too heating, and a ready substitute was found in beer or wine. After this solid repast came the hour of contemplation and repose, ushered in by the fumes of the fragrant tobacco. Reading was rarely indulged in. The morning "siesta" over, the time was spent in visiting or receiving neighbours, looking over the buildings and machinery, writing, or other light employment, not forgetting a stimulating luncheon and occasional draughts of sangaree, punch, or brandy-and-water. As evening approached, preparations were made for the great object of the day, dinner, which consisted of soups, fish, fowl, and viands of all kinds, to which a vigorous appetite did ample justice. Punch, beer, wine, were again handed round, and attendants in naked grace were employed in beating off with fragrant branches the remorseless mosquitoes, who in hundreds were buzzing about audibly, and no doubt sharpening their "probosces" ready for an attack on the vulnerable proportions of the Dutchman. The night was marked by copious libations and smoking, until at length, overpowered with fatigue, repletion, and happiness, the lordly planter sank into the arms of repose, to dream of insurrections and earthquakes.

The other elements of society moved round the planter as their centre; for although not highest in rank, his power was most generally diffused through the different classes. The slaves bought with his money were the servants of his will. Their ignorance and their dependence exaggerated his position. The few tradesmen who there existed had been principally brought from the more civilised West Indian Islands, and they of course

looked up to him for employment and pay. The merchants were but too happy to partake of his patronage; the professional man had no other prospect of subsistence or of acquiring wealth except through his influence; and the civil officers appointed to administer the public functions of the colony found his hospitality so tempting and agreeable, that they were studious of keeping on the best possible terms with him.

We shall, hereafter, see how this elevated position of the planter became gradually altered when it had acquired its maximum of prosperity, and in the course of our history we shall have occasion to trace his subsequent reverses and humiliations to some of those very causes which formerly gave him such unlimited power, influence, and wealth. It is with individuals as with states. In the plenitude of their power and prosperity, men are too apt to suffer luxury and apathy to undermine their greatness.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AFRICAN NEGRO, HIS CHARACTER, IGNORANCE, SUPERSTITION, EMPLOYMENT, AMUSEMENTS, FOOD, LOW MORAL CONDITION—IMPORTATION OF SLAVES—ACCOUNT OF THE SEVERAL TRIBES—SLAVE MARKETS—BUSH NEGROES—HABITS AND MODE OF LIFE—EXPEDITIONS AGAINST THEM—CONCUBINAGE—MIXTURE OF RACES—CHARACTER OF MULATTO.

THE African negro was imported into this country for the purpose of toil. We have seen a company established to buy and use him as a species of cattle. The very contemplation of such a scheme shows us at once the prevailing features of society at the time. No enlightened object of civilisation, no urgent feelings of philanthropy, no Christian zeal led to his introduction. The race from whence he sprang had long been regarded by more civilised Europe as brutalised and benighted. The mind was not considered in this barter; the feelings and the passions of nature were not taken into account; the immortal spirit of the bondsman was treated in this terrible speculation as if it had no existence. The influences of Christian charity had, as yet, scarcely reached these shores. No priest or apostle of the Saviour was seen in this wide field, and the heart, unchecked by reproof, and hardened by iniquity, revelled in its desperate wickedness. The poor African, the child of ignominy and scorn, was found a helpless victim.

His character, to be described impartially, should be traced with pity and toleration. Entering the world with the peculiarity of a different coloured skin to the more enlightened among nations, this circumstance, with others, was turned to his disadvantage, and he was pronounced a fit prey for more civilised beings. Bred up in the lowest state of ignorance and barbarity, under a burning sun, his habits of necessity betrayed an apathy and want of intelligence which were fatal to him. In his own country he had been taught to witness the last degradation of the human character ; he inherited from his parents no qualities but those of the abject bondsman ; his will, his desires, his actions, were not his own, and he was trained in the belief that he was an inferior being, and a culprit from the day of his birth among the sons of Adam. Example had made him callous, idle, and obstinate ; necessity had made him cunning and artful; want of education had left him helpless, ignorant, and brutal. Right and wrong were terms that conveyed no definite meaning to him ; he knew only what displeased, and what gratified him. Power and authority had made him timid, abject, and debased. He had no object in the world beyond the indulgence of his appetites; he knew his life was one of servitude, but he had no impulse or ambition for freedom. The yoke was fitted on him, and he grew to it, taking insensibly the shape of the moral deformity it imposed upon him. It was irksome and galling, but he was too indolent and hopeless to shake it off. Yet, under all these blighting disadvantages, he was patient, submissive, affectionate, grateful, and even cheerful. He had felt the rapacity of power in his own country; he had witnessed scenes of bloodshed and violence, and concluded in his simple mind that the world was filled only with

such scenes. He saw the different races of animals perpetually destroying each other, and he thought himself not so far removed from their condition as to justify the expectation of any happier state of existence for himself. The chiefs among his people, their princes and great men, were regarded as only more fortunate, or more powerful in the strife than the rest, and were considered as maintaining their ascendancy by naked brute force alone. The vast universe was not looked upon as a system of humanity, regulated by the wisdom of Providence; but as a chaos over which chance and accident presided. The negroes were idolaters; forms of worship were rare amongst them. Their religion consisted in wild appeals to the spirits of evil, to deprecate vengeance, or misfortunes, or to propitiate protection. The calamities of life were attributed to the evil influence of inferior spirits, whom they called Jumbi, and hence it was not strange that the more shrewd among them should pretend to a mysterious intercourse with these spirits, in order to enable them to practise profitable impositions upon the credulity of the ignorant. Such persons received the name of Obeah-men, and dealt in charms, talismans, and artifices. They gave the good spirit no service, thinking him too pure to need it; some believed that man sprung from a great spider, named Arransie; others affirmed that the good spirit was called Jan Campas, and called him God, although they say that he was a good man, who made both black and white people, but that the black chose the gift of gold, and the white man that of arts and knowledge, when the first were made servants to the last. Others supposed that men were found in holes and pits. They had no fear of being hanged, because it left them whole and sound to enter upon another state of existence, but they dreaded

being beheaded, or broken on the wheel, because they believed it would incapacitate them from enjoying a future life.

All ages and races have had their superstitions, and it would, indeed, have been singular if the African had formed an exception. The sybils and oracles of ancient Italy and Greece are reflected under a different form in the obeahs and orgies of the uncivilised African.

Torn from his native country, his home, and friends, he was brought into a strange land, and made acquainted with a new taskmaster, who forced upon him the necessity of working. If he refused to work, he was subjected to the cruelty of the lash, which, according to a Dutch writer,* was often steeped in brine, or pickle and peppers, but not, as asserted by him, for the purpose of wanton vengeance, but rather to prevent any evil consequences from its application. Brought as this poor ignorant negro was in contact with a more civilised people, we shall soon see how rapidly his tastes, his habits, and character became modified by such communion; not greater or more marked were the physical and ethnological changes produced by such an intercourse, than the vast moral revolution effected in his nature. The tendency of dependents in every age and in every condition has been to imitate those above them; but the ignorant, who, struck with the novelty or merits of a picture, try to copy it, produce only a caricature. It is the natural tendency of inferiors to model their habits and manners on the example of their superiors; and hence arises—especially in feudal states of society—the great influence which is exercised over the national mind by the conduct of the higher classes. Thus, in Greece, the high refinement of the educated ranks gradually spread to the citizens, and imparted its polish to their tastes and customs. Again, in

* Hartsink.

the Roman Empire the luxury and idleness of the patrician class infected the plebeian orders, till the whole state sank under the enervating influence; and nearer to our own day may be cited the still more striking instance of the French revolution, when the people, debased and rendered desperate by the callous and unprincipled conduct of the nobles, rapidly imbibed those dangerous principles which led to the overthrow of rank and religion. Illustrations of the effects of example upon the uneducated masses need not be accumulated; and if we find this direct action infallibly producing uniform results in the civilised communities of Europe, we cannot be much surprised that it should operate similarly in remote and despotic societies, in which only two classes existed —the masters and the slaves. That there were many excellent and virtuous traits in the character of the old settlers is undeniable. There is scarcely a work published by travellers who had visited the colony at differet times, which does not contain numerous instances of creditable humanity and generous feelings; but it is the perverse condition of human nature to copy what is bad rather than what is good, and the negro, if he is unlike his white superior in the best qualities, will be found at least to resemble him in his worst. In order that we may be able to understand more clearly how this spirit of depravity sets in, and is encouraged by circumstances, let us follow the slaves for a moment in their labours and general mode of life.

At early dawn they were summoned forth to work by the stunning clatter of a large bell or gong. The efficient and healthy were then distributed in gangs, according to their age, sex, or capacity, to each of which a headman, or driver (called by the Dutch "Bomba," or "Mustee Knegt"), was attached. Armed with a little "brief authority"—the whip—this driver followed his gang to

their several duties in the field, where they continued until about eight A.M., when time was allowed for breakfast and rest. Again the bell sounded, and they returned to their labour until twelve; then to dinner, and afterwards to work again until five or six P.M., when they retired to their homes and to their supper. They lived, for the most part, in long ranges of wooden buildings, subdivided into small rooms, to contain one or more families. These buildings were in general tolerably comfortable, and it was no unusual thing for small portions of land to be attached to them, which the slaves were at liberty to cultivate for their own profit. Here they kept pigs and poultry, and the thrifty and industrious had an opportunity of earning a little money, which subsequently became of much importance. They were punished for behaving ill by the whip, or confinement in the stocks, and other measures of severity; but in cases of rebellion, or murder, they were made to undergo a still more terrible chastisement, which cannot be mentioned here.

They were very fond of dancing and music, using a kind of guitar called a "banja," and several varieties of drums and tambarines. They accompanied their dancing with strange songs or chants adapted to the style of the dance—sometimes low and monotonous, at others loud and boisterous. On Sundays, or festival days, there was rarely any work done; and at certain seasons of the year they received presents from the planters of clothing, cooking utensils, ornaments, &c. Spirits were also served out to them occasionally, and thus the taste for intoxication was introduced among them, and led to many depravities and abuses. Their food consisted chiefly of plantains, salt fish, rice, &c., mixed up with the condiments of the country, such as peppers. The sick or infirm were confined to a building called the hospital, which was visited at stated periods by a medical prac-

titioner, who had under him sick nurses and attendants to obey his orders. The health of the slave was, indeed, provided for in the ratio of his value, as farmers provide for their cattle in order to keep them in working condition. A death was grieved for as a loss to the property, and sickness and destitution guarded against as a fire, or any other evil which might interfere with the profits of the estate. There was no attempt made to provide mental or religious education, as it was apprehended that the moral elevation of the slaves would lead to dangerous innovations. Marriage was unknown; but children were born, and grew up to the inheritance of slavery. They received their names* at the hands of their owners, and were often "branded" instead of being baptised. Thus passed away the life of the slave; and, comparing it with the state of the lower orders in most countries, it cannot be denied that it possessed some advantages, so far as physical circumstances were concerned. From the cradle to the grave every want was supplied; and the animal lived, worked, and died without tasting that bitter experience which wrings the stout heart of many a more civilised peasant in the struggle for subsistence.

If the happiness of human beings depended on the regular supply of food, exercise, and medicine, there is no doubt the slave ought to have been happy; and, knowing nothing better, perhaps he was. But it is impossible, from our point of sight, to contemplate with satisfaction a course of treatment which kept him in health only to reduce him to the condition of a working machine or a beast of burden. It is quite true that he had never enjoyed liberty, and was, perhaps, from that

* The most classical names were often given to the slaves; as, for instance, Pompey, Cæsar, Scipio, Hannibal, Jupiter, Venus, Juno, Bacchus, Apollo, &c. The English followed this practice, but introduced a little variety, calling them London, Scotland, Monday, Sambo, Quashy, Prince, Queen, Cuffy, &c.

very circumstance, not very well qualified to enjoy it; it is true, also, that his mental powers had never been developed, and that the privation of mental pleasures was comparatively no great penalty; and that never having felt the high privileges of religious inspirations, the want of religious instruction was a matter of utter indifference to him. But evils are not the less evils because those who suffer them are incapable and ignorant. It is the high mission of civilisation to improve, correct, and elevate; and to draw an argument for the perpetuation of slavery from the mere fact of having found it in existence is as unreasonable and barbarous as it would be for a colony of settlers to excuse themselves from the toil of tilling the ground, on the plea that it came into their hands in a state of nature. But colonists do not apply that argument to the earth—they clear it, plough it, plant it, and work its capabilities to the highest point of cultivation; it is the human serf, the hereditary bondsman alone, they keep in his original condition, or rather whom they plunge into a worse condition, by placing him in new and dangerous circumstances, and expanding before him those advantages of knowledge, power, and freedom, which they permit him to contemplate, but will not suffer him to participate in. They excite strange passions in him, they stimulate his activity, tempt his ignorance, fill his mind with novel desires, awaken his capacity without instructing it, and take advantage of his helplessness to crush him down lower and lower in the scale of humanity.

The slave-trade was in full operation in the eighteenth century, and cargoes of valuable slaves were brought to these shores. They were shipped from the coast of Africa in tolerable health; but after the confinement and cruel hardships of a three or four weeks' passage in the hold of ill-ventilated vessels, they generally arrived in a

deplorable condition. The horrors of the middle passage are too well known to require any description in this place. The closely-packed slaves, when freed from their dens, were often unable to stand; they could not endure the light after having been so long shut up in darkness; and they required the most careful and skilful treatment for many weeks, and sometimes for months, to bring them back into working order. The mortality at times was frightful—as much as 50 or 75 per cent. perished either on the passage or soon after landing; and fearful as were the returns of the deaths at subsequent periods of the free immigrants, the mortality never equalled that which for many years took place among the shackled African slaves. Fortunately, however, this was not always the case, and as it was evidently for the interest of all parties that the slave should be imported in as fine condition as possible, great care was often shown for their comfort and good appearance.

The slaves imported were procured from various parts of the coast and interior of Africa, and their value was differently estimated, as will appear from the following account, chiefly derived from an old Dutch writer,* on the subject:

The *Ardras*, called also *Dongos* (as well as other slaves who had cut marks upon their bodies), were brought from Inda (better known as Tida) and Ardra, towns near the western sea-coast of Africa, from a distance of fifty miles to the north-east of Ardra. They were not, however, of the best sort, although accustomed to agriculture, and capable of being rendered useful. The men, women, and children, had gashes upon their cheeks, but those of rank amongst them were marked only about the forehead. The *Nago* slaves differed little from the above, and were well adapted for labour;

* Hartsink.

they had streaks, or curves, which represented rudely the outline of animals upon their bodies. The *Mallais* slaves were brought to Tida, Ardra, and Jaquire, from a distance of about three months' journey. They were an excellent people, and accustomed to severe labour, which they willingly undertook. They brought high prices in the market. Their tattooed marks differed in some respect from the Tibou and Guiamba negroes. The *Aquiras*, distinguished by lines upon the back and breast in the form of lizards and snakes, had the character of being active and faithful to their masters. The *Tibou* slaves were of the worst kind, good for nothing, except light house work. They had long gashes upon the cheeks, breast, and stomach. The *Foin* slaves were recognised by scratches upon the temples; they were also a bad people, lazy, thievish, and addicted to filthy habits. The *Guiamba* slaves resembled the two last-named races, and were marked like the *Tibous*. The negroes from *Tida* and *Jaquin* committed thefts when they had an opportunity, but were otherwise true to their masters; they had upon their cheeks several spots or points. The *Ayois* negroes, a martial and enterprising race, were well inclined to work, which they performed better than any of the other nations. They were known by long gashes stretching from ear to ear. They were the terror of the rest; held their lives of no account when their passions were roused, and pursued their objects with an ardour it was difficult to restrain.

Other slaves were known by the names of the places they came from. The negroes of Gorée were among the best—strong, honest, and faithful; they had upon the temples three gashes about three fingers broad. The negroes from Sierra Leone were also very strong, and good for employment; they had four gashes upon the forehead. The negroes from Cabo Monto were neither

so strong nor so useful as the others, but made good slaves, and had upon each cheek a gash extending from the head to the chin; they were in general of a lively temperament. The negroes from Cape La Hoe, or Lahore, or the Gold Coast, possessed equally valuable qualities, and were brought in great numbers to Surinam, where a famous traffic was established, and from whence the slaves were carried to other colonies. They were marked over the whole body with figures of birds and animals, and wore round the neck a string of red sea-shells, which was regarded as a kind of amulet or charm. They were for the most part strong, tall, and well made, but not very black in colour; *as a general rule, it was remarked that the darker the colour of the negro, the stronger he was.*

The real *Delmina* negroes were all born in the village, or crom of D'Elmina, and were not saleable, such sale being against the laws. Those people which were purchased at St. George D'Elmina, came from the Asiantyn, Hautaschi, Fantysche, Alguirasche, Wassaches, and Akinsche countries. The men, as well as the women, were marked upon the cheeks and breasts with several gashes. Among these people were found some old slaves quite grey, who had a custom of smearing their hair with charcoal to make it black.

The *Annamaboe* negroes (sometimes called *Fantynes*) belonged to the English, a well-conducted tribe, and best suited of all for the work of the plantations. They were marked upon the forehead with points, or spots, burnt in with gunpowder. Among the *Fantynes* were found some *Akinsche* and *Ashantees.* Between these three nations no marked difference existed except in language.

The *Acra* negroes were brave, strong, and good slaves. These excellent qualities rendered them costly

in the market. They were under the protection of the Danes, but the Dutch and English had the control of such as were located near their forts.

The *Abo* and *Papa* negroes were little meddled with; the last were said to have a kind of poison placed under their nails, with which they threatened to kill any one, if exasperated; hence, perhaps, the disinclination that was shown to interfere with them.

The *Cormantyn* negroes were of a good disposition, but never forgave an injury; they always attempted the life of any person who offended them, and, failing in their purpose, destroyed themselves. They had no characteristic marks, but were known by their fine smooth black skin. The *Loango*, or *Goango* negroes (no doubt the present Kroomen), were a vicious race, and practised cannibalism. Their teeth were so exquisitely sharpened that they could easily bite off a finger, and all the other negroes hated and feared them. At the marriage of their kings a certain proportion of each tribe were killed for the purpose of furnishing a rich banquet. These people were never to be depended upon. They absconded from work, hid in the forests, and lived upon animals and reptiles. To the eastward and southward of the coast the negroes were of a bad quality; whilst from the north-west the best kind were procured.

Such is the account handed down of the qualities and value of the several tribes of Africa imported to this colony. It would be impossible now-a-days to trace out the descendants of any one of these tribes. They have all merged into one large human family, the black creole, and have relinquished, it is to be hoped for ever, most of the characteristic marks, both physical and moral, by which their progenitors were distinguished. The elaborately tattooed skin, the cannibal appetite, the flattened forehead and nose, the prominent jaws and mouth,

have more or less disappeared; but, unfortunately, the indolence, the superstition, the immorality of the African character obtains to an extent deplorable and alarming. Emancipation and civilisation have but partially done their work, and the abandoned cane-piece and uncultivated lands stand out as evidence of the want of energy and industry among the lower classes. Up to this hour cargoes of liberated Africans are still imported to these shores, but their influence is trifling in the social scale. Their labour is valuable, but their numbers are inadequate to the duties required of them. Eagerly sought after, they receive abundant care and attention, which, however, does not altogether wean them from their native African habits, although they gradually adapt themselves to surrounding circumstances. The change is undoubtedly beneficial to them; but it is questionable whether they do not keep alive among their black brethren, those feelings of barbarity and superstition which still continue to retard the progress of true civilisation.

Returning to the narrative of the original importation of slaves, we will place before the reader a picture of the slave-trade as it existed in its earliest days in this colony. The arrival of these living cargoes was hailed with general satisfaction, and a depôt was established for the reception and convenience of the slaves, where they were kept till the time appointed for their disposal. The vendue, or sale, was generally effected publicly, and the manner in which it was conducted affords a curious insight into the habits and character of society at that time.

A slave-market was looked upon as a kind of fair, to which, indeed, it bore a striking resemblance. Public notices were issued, announcing when and where it was to be held. It was looked forward to as a gala day.

Urged on by curiosity, excitement, or speculation, persons of all qualities and ages, and of both sexes, decked out in their gayest apparel, hurried to the scene of barter, where, arranged in lots, and prepared for sale, stood the miserable objects of their cupidity. What a contrast was here presented—the lordly proprietor, the usurious speculator, the insatiate sensualist, the timid female and pampered child, had even gathered in groups about the dark children of Africa, who, with anxious hearts and downcast eyes, awaited the result. It was not long in being decided. A purchaser would approach and investigate the qualities of the animal he was about to buy. The scanty covering which the custom of the day required, threw but a slight veil over the defects or imperfections of physical conformation. The limb was carefully examined, its action tested, the surface of the body scrutinised for the detection of any morbid condition of the skin, the mouth inspected, the functions of walking, running, and lifting were practised at the desire of the party about to make an offer. Delicacy, pity, generosity, never interfered with the mercenary considerations which regulated these proceedings.

It was no unusual thing for ladies to be present during such examinations, and even little children were called upon to choose by chance, or caprice, the future slave who was to obey the wants and calls of little "massa" or "missy." The following account of one of these sales, of the date of 1796, is furnished by an eye-witness:—"Not simply from curiosity, but from a desire of acquiring instruction from whatever occurs of peculiar interest, I have again been led to be present at one of those most humiliating scenes, a sale of human merchandise, where I saw what is here termed a prime cargo of 300 men and women from the Gold Coast of Africa, all

human beings like ourselves, exposed to public vendue, even as the herds of sheep and oxen in Smithfield market. But, although I had been more than a year in the West Indies, I was glad to find that my European feelings were not so entirely blunted as to allow me to witness such a scene without experiencing the painful sensations which naturally arise in the breast of an Englishman when seeing his fellow-creatures thus miserably degraded. The crowd was as great as at Coventry fair, and amid the throng I observed many females as well white as of colour, who, decked out in tinsel finery, had all come to the mart to buy slaves either for themselves, their masters, or keepers. Infants, too, were brought to point the lucky finger to a sable drudge for little self, upon the same principle which leads mamma to take dear babe to a lottery-office to finger out the happy ticket which is to make little missy's fortune. The poor blacks were not exposed to public gaze upon a high stool, in order to be first examined and then knocked down at the hammer, as at the Dutch sale at Berbische, but were divided into three great lots according to their value, and the price being fixed upon, purchasers were left to select from which ever division they might prefer. Boys from eleven to fourteen years of age sold for 600 or 700 florins; the price of the women was from 700 to 800 florins, and of the men from 700 to 900 florins; but a few of the strongest were valued somewhat higher. The agent who conducted the sale is a liberal man, possessed of human sentiments and a cultivated mind, but it is unfortunately his calling to deal in human flesh, and he very justly remarked to me, that in following this occupation it is necessary to give an opiate to the finer feelings of nature. Amidst a scene everywhere repugnant to humanity, I was pleased to remark that a general

sympathy was excited towards one particular family, whose appeals to the compassion of the multitude were not less powerful than their claims. This family consisted of a mother, three daughters, and a son. The parent, although the days of youth were past, was still a well-looking woman; the children appeared to be from fourteen to twenty years of age; they were very like the mother, and still more resembled each other, being all of distinguished face and figure, and remarkably the handsomest negroes of the whole cargo. Their distress lest they should be separated and sold to different masters was so strongly depicted upon their countenances, and expressed in such lively and impressive appeals, that the whole crowd were led impulsively to commiserate their suffering, and by universal consent they were removed from the three great lots and placed in a separate corner by themselves, in order that they might be sold to the same master. Observing their extreme agitation, I was led particularly to notice their conduct as influenced by the terror of being torn from each other, and I may truly say that I witnessed a just and faithful representation of the distressed mother, and such as might bid defiance even to the all-imaginative power of a Siddons. When any one approached their little group, or chanced to look toward them with the attentive eye of a purchaser, the children in broken sobs crouched to their tearful mother, who in agonising impulse instantly fell down before the spectator, bowed herself to the earth, and kissed his foot; then alternately clinging to his legs and pressing her children to her bosom, she fixed herself upon her knees, clasped her hands together, and in anguish cast up a look of humble petition which might have found its way even to the heart of a Caligula."*

* Pinckard.

Such was the slave-market in former times ; and little as any one may feel inclined to attribute to the Africans the possession of acute sensibility, it must be admitted that this was a process from which even their dull nature must have instinctively recoiled. That they did recoil from it—that it rendered them desperate, and generated in their minds feelings of horror, is sufficiently proved by the numbers that attempted to make their escape, preferring any risk of danger or destitution to the life of the gang and the lash. Large numbers of slaves annually absconded from the Dutch settlements, and, associating in small parties, hid themselves in the woods. Most of these slaves were of the lowest order of intellect, and actuated by the worst passions of the human race. Many of them had committed serious crimes, and thus sought to evade punishment, while others were filled with projects of plunder and destruction to their masters. They were called "Bush negroes," from their living in the bush or forests. Their numbers increased to such an extent that they gave serious alarm to the white inhabitants, and measures were repeatedly taken to disperse them. They made predatory excursions in the neighbourhoods they infested, and carried off provisions, or whatever else they could lay their hands upon; and such were the sentiments of revenge they entertained against the white men, that whenever they happened to surprise any of them, they seized them, hurried them away to the woods, and put them to the most miserable deaths. The mangled bodies of their victims, afterwards discovered, afforded revolting evidence of the most barbarous treatment. Rivalling the ferocity of the animals with whom they herded, they maintained, however, a kind of discipline amongst themselves, electing a chief,

whom they strictly obeyed, and always acting in concert under his orders. Rendered desperate by their situation, these lawless savages became the terror of the country. Fortunately they were at length subdued, and no further instances have since occurred of a similar organisation. Solitary individuals have been encountered in remote places, but they were generally found to be idiots or persons of weak intelligence who had lost their way in the forests, where they supported life by destroying and eating birds, insects, reptiles, and occasionally gathering a few roots and fruits. When found and brought back, they evinced no ferocity, anger, or surprise; apathetic and indifferent to consequences, they sluggishly and cunningly watched the earliest opportunity to return to their wild and savage life.*

The following description of the habits of the Bush negroes, and the attempts made to subdue them, is from the pen of an early but faithful writer:—"The Bush negroes were men of the worst description, cruel and bloodthirsty, and revolting in combination, plotted the destruction of the planters, in order to take the colony into their possession; but being frustrated in their designs, have saved themselves from punishment by flying into the recesses of the forest, from whence they issued only to ravage and plunder. They had subjected themselves to a sort of regular discipline under captain and lieutenants, and the lower orders of them were compelled to toil in the night, by going out of the woods in plundering parties to steal plantains and other provisions from the estates; but the labour to which they were ex-

* An instance occurred in this country in 1845 of a Bush negro being found. He had long, hard nails, and was decked out in the plumage of wild birds and the skins of animals. He refused to eat the ordinary food at first, and looked longingly upon fowls, which he seemed anxious to devour. He scarcely spoke, but muttered a few words, and remained all day passive and inactive. Crowds of persons went to see him at the lunatic asylum where he was confined.

posed by this night duty was so much more severe than that required of them in their common duty as slaves upon the plantations, that some of them have been known to desert from the woods to resume a life of slavery.

"From the injury done, and the increasing number of these hordes, it was deemed necessary that a body of troops should be sent against them. A party of Dutch soldiers were duly marched to exterminate the brigands; but they were defeated by the negroes, and few escaped, most of them being killed, and their scalps or bodies fixed against the trees. A second expedition was sent out, composed of faithful slaves and the native Indians, who held the Bush negroes in abhorrence. Well provided and equipped, this second band separated into two parties, and boldly advanced into the wood to form a combined attack. Upon their march, they passed the dead bodies of the Dutch soldiers tied to the trees. Not deterred by this horrid spectacle, they proceeded onwards, having the sagacious Indian on their flanks, by whose acuteness and penetration they discovered the various situations where the different companies of the brigands had taken up their residence, and by well-concerted attacks defeated and routed them wheresoever they met them. As an encouragement to the able and new-raised troops, a premium was offered for every right hand of a Bush negro which should be brought in; and when they returned from the successful expedition, they appeared with seventy black arms displayed upon the points of their bayonets, causing a very singular and shocking spectacle to the beholders. Three hundred guilders had been fixed upon as the price, but it was found necessary to reduce the premium, lest the slaves should kill their prisoners, or even destroy each other, to

obtain it. The exertion and fatigue required in such an expedition cannot be well conceived by those who are accustomed only to regular and systematic warfare, nor is it probable that such a service could have been supported in this climate by European soldiers. In addition to all the difficulties of making their way through the unknown and almost impenetrable woods, they knew not where to find the enemy's posts, or were at every minute liable to be fallen upon by surprise. At first entering the bush, the march was continued to a great distance nearly knee-deep in water, and when further advanced, the troops had to scramble through the thickets or follow each other by a confined path in Indian file, and after the harassing march of the day to lie down at night on the bare ground under the trees, the officers suspending their hammocks from bough to bough ; they had, moreover, to carry the whole of their provisions, arms, and ammunition, and every other necessary required for their success, upon their backs. But for the assistance given by the Indians, the brigands had probably never been subdued, perhaps not even found! The expertness of these men in such a pursuit is peculiar, and beyond all that could be imagined by those who live in crowded society. They not only hear sounds in the wood, which are imperceptible to others, but judge with surprising accuracy of the distance and direction whence they proceed. The position of a fallen leaf, or the bending of a bramble, too slight to be noticed by an European eye, conveys to them certain intelligence respecting the route taken by those whom they pursue. From constant practice and observation, their organs of sense become highly improved, and they hear with an acuteness and see with a precision truly surprising to those who are unacquainted with their habits and their vigilance. With

such guides the expedition moved in confidence, and was conducted in safety. Some of the encampments of the brigands discovered and routed, had existed during fifteen years, concealed in the profoundest gloom of the forest. The following was the mode usually observed in establishing their fixed places of residence and resort:—Having fixed upon the spot most favourable for their purpose, a circular piece of ground was cleared of its wood, and in the centre of this they built huts, and formed the encampments, planting round about the buildings oranges, bananas, plantains, yams, eddoes, and other kinds of provisions; thus, in addition to the trees of the forest, procuring themselves further concealment by the plantation which gave them food. The eddoes were found in great plenty, and had seemed to constitute their principal diet. Round the exterior of this circular spot was cut a deep and wide ditch, which being filled with water, and stuck round the sides and bottom with sharp-pointed sticks, served as a formidable barrier of defence. The path across this ditch was placed two or three feet below the surface, and wholly concealed from the eye by the water being always thick and muddy. Leaves were strewed, and steppings, similar in their kind, made to the edges of the ditch at various parts, as a precaution to deceive any who might approach respecting the real situation of the path. But the proper place of crossing was found out by the acuteness of the Indians, who soon discovered that to attempt to pass at any other part was to be empaled alive. It was found that the brigands had eight of these encampments, or points of rendezvous, in the woods, one of which still remained undiscovered. After much fatigue in endeavouring to discover it, the search was relinquished, in the idea that some of the prisoners, either by indul-

gence or torture, would be induced to make it known; but this expectation has only led to disappointment. All the means used failed, and the prisoners, faithful to their cause, suffered torture and death rather than betray their forest associates. The cruel punishments that were applied to these miserable blacks would be almost incredible. The ringleaders being taken, were tried and executed. Some were burnt alive, others hung in chains and allowed to perish, lingering out for several days; but they made no complaint or lament. They bore the most severe pain with a firmness truly heroic. No disclosure escaped their lips, no sigh betrayed their emotion. They despised death, and were only concerned as to its mode.

Pompa mortis magis terret, quam mors ipsa."*

As far as the peculiar conditions of its formation permitted, society may now be said to have reached a certain stage of organisation; yet one essential element was wanted. The hitherto unsettled state of things held out little inducement for European females to venture into the colony, and the few who were to be found in it were not persons whose education or moral habits were likely to exercise a very beneficial influence. The consequences inseparable from such circumstances ensued. Unrestrained by the presence of refined and virtuous women, and enjoying a perfect impunity of power over all surrounding associations, the colonists surrendered themselves to a life of unbridled depravity. Having no scandal of public opinion to encounter, and being wholly liberated from all religious and social obligations, they formed intimate relations with the humblest of their slaves, beginning, perhaps, with some vague sense of personal responsibility, but gradually breaking down all

* Pinckard.

the barriers of honour and decency, until the whole country presented a scene of demoralisation that would scarcely be credited in the present age. The authority of the master was omnipotent, and it was employed without remorse in promoting the indulgence of the worst passions. The result was, that the majority of the old planters of the West adopted the customs and privileges of the despots of the East. A seraglio was established on almost every property; and the harem of a planter, if it did not emulate the luxury and pomp of the Turk, transcended its prototype in coarseness and sensuality. The slave, though raised to her master's embraces, was still his menial; her children became his property, were still accounted slaves, and were often compelled to the labour of the field, without being allowed to derive any advantage from their European descent.* This, however, was not the general rule. The mother and her offspring were frequently made free by purchase, and the children brought up to some trade or business. From these unions sprung the mulatto, which in turn, mingling again with the white, produced the Terčerones and Quadroon, followed by the "Quarterones," the offspring of the white and the Terceron; all distinction finally vanishing in the "Quinterons," who owed their origin to a white and "Quarteron," called also "Mustees." This was the last gradation, there being no visible difference in colour or features between them and the whites; indeed, they were often fairer than Europeans, but generally devoid of the healthy rosy hue so striking in the latter. The children of the negro and mulatto were called "Samboes," and had a

* Many of this class of children were never made free, but left to grow up in ignorance and vice; many were actually included in the claim for compensation, with the connivance of their parents.

disagreeable complexion and features. In glancing at these various classes, we find the character of the mulatto standing out prominently from the rest.

Brown in colour, with short crisp hair, and features between those of the European and African, but generally more nearly resembling the latter, he was strongly formed, and well proportioned; and was marked by some of the most conspicuous traits of his descent on both sides—the prejudices and haughtiness of his European father, and the levity and the idleness of his African mother. He inherited from the former an instinct of independence and a love of authority; but these were neutralised by the languor and disinclination to exertion he derived from the latter. Quick to learn, he had not always the opportunity; eager of enjoyment, his means were restrained; jealous of his parentage, he was denied its privileges. Hence levity, cunning, and recklessness, took the place of those better elements, which, under more favourable circumstances, he might have successfully developed. In the course of time, however, as his position improved, he began to vindicate his European origin, and it would be unjust to deny him the possession of some excellent qualities, such as generosity and humanity. The mulattoes were generally educated in industrial occupations, which they follow to this day, and in which they exhibit much willingness and intelligence, and no inconsiderable capacity.

The negro characteristics, nevertheless, are still predominant—the indolence, the fondness for holidays and finery, and the passion for music and dancing, in which latter they excel. Wanting in the distinctive attributes that constitute an original race, they have failed to strike out a separate course for themselves; but they generally incline towards the customs and practices of the Europeans, and in all cases of conflicting interests they side

with the whites. To the peculiarity of their training, perhaps, may be ascribed the repugnance or contempt with which they regard the blacks; yet not having enough of industry or energy to achieve a high place in society, and abandoning the profitable pursuits of the field for more light and frivolous occupations, they are not unfrequently outstripped in worldly prosperity by the plodding and unambitious negro.

CHAPTER V.

ATTACKS OF THE FRENCH IN 1689, 1709, AND 1712, ON THE SETTLEMENTS OF BERBICE AND ESSEQUEBO RIVERS—BOMBARDMENT OF FORT NASSAU—CAPITULATION AND RANSOM OF BERBICE—TRANSFER OF BERBICE, 1714—ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT ABOUT SLAVES—BERBICE COMPANY, 1720—INVENTORY OF THE EFFECTS OF THE COLONY — ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT — INTRODUCTION OF COFFEE CULTIVATION—ORIGIN OF PAPER MONEY—THE COAST TRADE—MEMORIAL OF THE DIRECTORS OF BERBICE TO THE STATES OF HOLLAND, 1730—ORIGIN OF THE SYSTEM OF COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION, 1732—RAISING OF TAXES—APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNOR, PREDIKANT, AND OTHER OFFICERS—ORIGIN OF MILITIA FORCE—OF THE ORPHAN CHAMBER—PROGRESS OF THE PLANTATIONS.

THE undertakings of the Dutch, however distinguished by a spirit of enterprise, were chequered by misfortunes early in the eighteenth century.

About the year 1689, some ships (part of the squadron under Admiral de Casse, that had been unsuccessfully engaged in attacking Surinam) sailed up the river Berbice, landed some troops, and laid waste several plantations. The colonists were compelled to buy out their invaders, and finally got rid of them by a ransom of 20,000 guilders in the form of a bill of exchange drawn upon the proprietors of the estates in Vlissingen. A subsequent arrangement relieved them from the payment of this obligation. The governor of Surinam, Van

Schupenhingen, had taken some French prisoners during the late invasion, and it was agreed between the contracting parties that the bill of ransom should be cancelled, on condition that the prisoners were delivered up, together with a sum of about 5000 or 6000 guilders, and some sugar which was ready for shipping in the river Berbice.

It would appear from this latter circumstance, that although the value of the settlements on the Berbice was not very considerable, yet that the cultivation of sugar had already commenced and made some progress. It is in this district that we find the first allusion made to the manufacture of sugar. Undeterred by the late invasion, the indefatigable settlers increased the number of their plantations, and with renewed vigour applied themselves to the cultivation of the soil.

The settlements on the river Essequebo were also exposed to frequent assaults from piratical vessels. On the 10th December, 1707, Peter Van der Heyden Resen was appointed commander of this district, and under his administration considerable progress had been made by the indefatigable Dutch. In 1709 two French armed vessels sailed up the river, whose banks were still studded with Indian villages. Their object was plunder; but awed by the strength displayed in the fortified position of the Dutch colonists, and their evident determination to offer a stout resistance, the marauders contented themselves by attacking, burning, and plundering the villages of the Indians, who however retaliated, by decoying some of their enemies into the forests, where they took ample retribution for the wrongs that had been inflicted on them.

Foiled in their first attempts, the French prepared for a second invasion of the settlements on the river Berbice, organising upon this occasion a considerable and

effective force, under the command of Baron de Mouans. On the 8th November, 1712, the French commander arrived in the river Berbice with three ships and some sloops, three mortars, and about 600 troops. On the 9th they passed the guard-house at the entrance unmolested, owing to the want of hands on the part of the Dutch to occupy that post. On the 10th, having ascended fifty miles up the river, they landed some of the troops, and reconnoitred Fort Nassau. The next day a French officer proceeded to the fort, and demanded the surrender of the colony. This demand was indignantly refused, and the threat of bombardment which accompanied it was put into execution on the same evening by the French. The assault was heroically resisted; and it was not till after a fierce siege of four days, during which about 160 bombs were thrown into the defences, that the "chamade," or beating of drums on the part of the Dutch, signified to the French that the besieged were willing to capitulate. After some little difficulty a conference was held between the two commanders, and on the 16th November the captured colony was ransomed by the Dutch for the sum of 300,000 guilders, after the following manner:

	Guilders.
153 male negroes and 91 female, at 300 guilders each	73,200 0
15 young negroes (from 10 to 12 years old), 111 guilders each	1,665 0
	74,865 0
734 hogsheads and 1 tierce of sugar, valued at	22,040 0
Provisions and merchandise	21,118 14
Bill of Exchange	181,975 6
	300,000 0

In addition to this large sum, a further payment of 10,000 guilders was exacted by the unscrupulous French to exempt the inhabitants from private spoliation and other insults:

	Guilders.
Gold and silver	5138
Other cash	956
Merchandise	2949
6 hogsheads sugar	180
A slave and child	400
Sundries	377
	10,000*

Moreover, the French commander insisted on having hostages delivered up to him to accompany him to Europe with the bill of exchange, till it reached maturity and was duly paid. Two gentlemen, the two junior members of the Court of Policy, Gerard de Veirman and Hendrich Van Doorn, accordingly, leaving their wives and families behind them, accompanied the bill, which was drawn at six months on Jan and Cornelius Van Peere, of Flushing. Unfortunately, both these gentlemen died, one on the passage, and the other shortly after his arrival in Europe, and the bill when presented was refused payment. Two protests were made against it, one on the 12th May, 1713, the other on the 17th November, 1713. During the time occupied in the discussion about this bill, the colony of Berbice was provisionally ceded to France on the 13th September, 1713; but at the Treaty of Utrecht in 1714 it was given up by the French Government, through Joseph Maillet, to some Dutch merchants, viz., Cornelius Van Peere, Van Hoorn (Nicholas and Hendrich), Arnold Dix, and Peter Schurman, all of Amsterdam,† who agreed to pay 108,000 florins on account of the protested bill, and who were thus to become the proprietors of the colony under the protection of the States or United Provinces. One quarter of the colony was, however, to be reserved to the original proprietor of the settlement, Van Peere.

* The terms of the capitulation and subsequent ransom were signed by Steven de Waterman, Laurens de Feer, M. Heyn, Claas Ral, and A. Tierens.

† See Acte Van Cessie en Transport der Colonie de Berbice, door Joseph Maillet, 99. Aan de Van Hoorns, 24th October, 1714. Hartsink, p. 305.

The necessity for obtaining hands to cultivate the estates induced this company of merchants, Messrs. Van Peere, Van Hoorn, Dix, and Schurman, to attempt to introduce labourers from the East (a curious foreshadowing of what was to occur in after years in the same colony); but their request was refused by the Government. In the same year, 1714, the "Staats-General" contracted* for African negroes, of whom one-third were to be females. These people were brought chiefly from the Angola or Ordra tribes on the coast of Guinea, in accordance with an agreement which, as an illustration of the manner in which these affairs were regulated, will be found inserted in the Appendix.

In 1719 Laurens de Heere was appointed commander of Essequebo. In the same year the West India Company of Berbice contracted with a Jew, named Simon Abrahams, to search for gold and silver, of which he was to have one-sixteenth share, but none was ever obtained. The ore discovered in 1721 resembled that of the western part of South America, but was of inferior value. The speculation proved unfortunate, and Abrahams returned to Holland in 1724.

The proprietors of Berbice, not having a capital equal to the cultivation of which the colony was capable, proposed, in 1720, to raise a fund of 3,200,000 florins, divided into 1600 shares of 2000 florins each, to be employed solely in cultivating sugar, cocoa, and indigo, of which 50 per cent. was to be repaid in eight instalments before April, 1724, and the remainder when required by the directors, who consisted of seven proprietors of 20,000 florins each, residing in Amsterdam. The actual proprietors were also to be paid, by way of indemnity, the sum of 800,000 florins, or to be allowed

* Hartsink, p. 313.

to purchase 400 shares. This company, the directors of which were afterwards increased to nine in number, held all the lands or estates in common; the shipping, the warehouses, the revenues of the custom-house, and the produce, were likewise the property of the shareholders, and a yearly dividend of the profits was to be apportioned. Of the proposed capital, only 1,882,000 florins was raised and invested, and the yearly dividends never reached more than 3 or 4 per cent. The shares in consequence soon fell from 2000 to 200 florins per cent., and were chiefly bought up by the new settlers as a kind of title to their several properties. The colony under this company was managed by the directors in Holland, who received an annual salary of 200 florins each, submitting their accounts to an annual meeting of proprietors, and appointing auditors to inspect them. Their management was at once cheap and efficient, their whole staff consisting of one secretary and two book-keepers, under whose arrangements the colony made rapid progress; the cultivation of property was extended, an ample supply of labour was introduced, a substantial fort (St. Andrew) was built at the junction of the rivers Canje and Berbice, and the luxuriant soil was devoted to the raising of various kinds of produce.

In the year 1720 an inventory was made of the property in the colony of Berbice, which gave the following results:

Inventory of effects belonging to the colony of Berbice, 1720:

1. 895 negro slaves.

2. 6 large and complete sugar plantations, with all the necessary appurtenances, for the cultivation and manufacture of produce; 2 cocoa plantations, ditto, ditto.

3. 1 fortress, or guard-house; 1 large fort (Nassau); 1 redoubt (opposite this fort); 4 outposts, situated inland;

the whole of these defences were furnished with 60 pieces of cannon, besides smaller weapons, and the necessary ammunition.

4. 1 smithy, including some iron, coal, &c.; 1 cedar-built church.

5. 1 bark, besides other small vessels, such as yachts, canoes, punts, &c.

6. The goods belonging to the fort and outposts; the cash in the treasury, about 4 or 500 guilders in amount; the provisions, medicaments, and sundries.

7. 524 head of cattle, besides some sheep, pigs, &c.

8. 281 horses.

9. 1 trading vessel, lying at the wharf (Hegte Thiet).

10. 1 tout or decked vessel,* nearly new, and fitted up at an expense of about 35,000 guilders.

11. The cargo of this vessel, namely, 8 or 900 hogsheads of sugar, besides other goods.

12. The sugar and other produce found in the colony.

At the first meeting of the new company (4th October, 1720), it was agreed to reduce the payment to the former proprietors of the colony from 8 to 600,000 guilders.

Of the above-mentioned capital of 1600 shares, 941 were taken by strangers, and 659 by the colonists, and the following instalments were made at different times, viz.:

1st November,	1720	.....	8 per cent.	
1st April,	1721	.....	8 „	
1st October,	...	.....	10 „	Besides a call of 8 per cent. in 1764, 1st August; owing to the loss occasioned by the insurrection.
1st April,	1722	.....	4 „	
1st May,	1724	.....	4 „	
1st October,	...	.....	4 „	
1st August,	1732	.....	4 „	
			42 per cent.	

The following is a copy of the articles of agreement of a proposed company for the extension of cultivation in the colony of Berbice, in September, 1720:

* A craft peculiar to the Dutch, and employed by them in trade.

1. The present proprietors are willing to give up all the plantations, with their appurtenances and other possessions in the said colony, for the sum of 800,000 guilders, as per inventory.

2. The proprietors to be exempt from all taxes, and payments of salaries to officials, sailors, and soldiers, &c., from the 18th March, 1721.

3. Any monies due to the said colony after such date to be received by the new company.

4. The present proprietors to hold by preference 400 shares in the new company, as well as any more shares as shall be allowed.

5. Of the proposed capital, viz., 3,200,000 guilders, 50 per cent. shall be paid, in 8 instalments, as follows:

				Guilders.
1720	1st November	8 per cent.	on the whole	256,000
1721	1st April	8 „	„	256,000
„	1st October	10 „	„	320,000
1722	1st April	8 „	„	256,000
„	1st October	4 „	„	128,000
1723	1st April	4 „	„	128,000
„	1st October	4 „	„	128,000
1724	1st April	4 „	„	128,000
				1,600,000

6. In the event of any instalment not being paid within one month after it becomes due by the shareholder, he shall forfeit his share or shares.

7. No further payment than the 50 per cent. shall be called for, except by the consent of a majority of the directors.

8. The administration of the affairs of the company to be conducted by seven directors, of whom Nicholas van Hoorn (or in his absence his brother Hendrich) and Peter Schurman should be two.

9. The other five directors shall be experienced merchants, elected by a majority of the other shareholders, and they shall be obliged to name an efficient substitute in case of their absence.

10. No person competent to be a director unless he holds at least ten shares in the company.

11. The directors appointed for life, but in case of non-qualification, or other cause, when absent from the assembly for a year and a day, another director shall be appointed.

12. The directors shall appoint the necessary servants of the company.

13. A full shareholder entitled to one vote to be possessed of ten shares at least.

14. The directors to receive no salary for the first four years, except a recognition of 200 guilders each per annum, but after a distribution of the funds they shall be paid at the rate of 5 per cent.

15. The directors shall expose the books of the company annually, and balance them, at the same time nominating two or three of the full shareholders to examine them andaudit the accounts.

16. The capital of 3,200,000 guilders shall be increased or diminished only with the consent of a majority of the shareholders.

17. The directors shall distribute the funds at such times as shall seem best to them.

18. It is to be understood that none of the shareholders shall transact any business in connexion with the company, but it shall be competent for them to sell their shares on paying 2 guilders for the transfer.

19. The shareholders shall continue the contract entered into by the former proprietors with Simon Abrahams to explore for minerals, &c.

20. Any alteration or amendment of the present rules which may be found necessary, shall take place only by consent of a majority of the shareholders.

21. The payment of the 800,000 guilders to the former proprietors shall be made in eight instalments, as follows:

			Guilders.
1720		1st November	180,000
1721		1st April	120,000
„		1st October	120,000
1722		1st April	160,000
„		1st October	80,000
1723		1st April	64,000
„		1st October	40,000
1724		1st April	36,000
			800,000

22. No one shall be allowed to hold less than three shares, or more than ten.

It was also determined to erect ten new large sugar plantations, with 100 slaves on each. Eight of these were in cultivation in 1722—viz., the Johanna; 2. Corelia Jacoba; 3. Savonette; 4. Hardenbroch; 5. Dageraad; 6. Hogslande; 7. Elizabeth; 8. Debora. A brickery was also established, but done away with in 1731. The council of Berbice about this time was increased from six to nine persons.

In the year 1721 coffee was first cultivated in Berbice, from seed obtained through the governor of the neighbouring settlement of Surinam—M. Courtier—who liberally called the attention of the inhabitants to the cultivation of that useful article—a public benefit of which they marked their sense by presenting him with a saddle-horse. Many new estates soon began to be laid out in coffee, which was found to thrive and bear exceedingly well in the alluvial soil. The directors of the company in Holland had the appointment of all the civil servants of the colony, and paid them, as well as the troops, in bills drawn on themselves at six weeks' date, which bills were received in Berbice in payment of taxes, and passed current in the ordinary transactions of business. To these bills may be traced the origin of the paper currency of the colony.

The States-General, under whose sovereignty or protection the company had placed Berbice, agreed to erect

forts, and keep a certain number of troops in them, on condition that the inhabitants contributed annually the sum of 75,000 florins, the proprietors on their parts reserving all legislative and executive functions in their own hands. In the year 1723, the colonists of Berbice began to open a trade along the American coast, which was at first resisted by the Dutch West India Company as an interference with their charter, but ultimately agreed to. The cultivation of this trade was of great importance to the infant settlement, as it not only enabled the people to procure a supply of live stock and a variety of goods and commodities necessary for their support, but to establish markets for articles of their own production. They were unable, however, to avail themselves of the full advantages of these circumstances, being obliged to ship the principal exportable commodities—such as sugar, cocoa, and coffee, in vessels belonging to the States-General.

In the year 1730, the directors of the colony made a representation to their High Mightinesses of the States, to the effect that, in 1720, when the administration of Berbice was taken over by them, they found only six plantations in cultivation, but that since that time eight others had been laid out,* which they expected would realise considerable advantages to the parties concerned; in order, however, to advance fully the interests of the community, they prayed that this colony should be placed upon the same footing as that of Surinam, that it should be free of access to all inhabitants of the parent country, and that lands should be granted to all new-comers who should require them, upon certain conditions to be subsequently named. The immediate effect of this representation does not appear; but that it received ample consideration may be inferred from the fact that in the year

* In 1731 the value of the settlements in Berbice was estimated at only 750,160 guilders.

1732 an octroy,* dated the 6th December, made its appearance, containing the most important provisions for the future government of the colony that had yet been contemplated, and marking very distinctly the progress that had been made in wealth and stability.

In the first place, the octroy declared that it had become necessary to provide a "constitution for Berbice." The States-General enacted that the government was to be administered by a governor and council—the governor to be appointed by the directors of the association, under a commission from the States; and the council (also termed the Court of Policy) to consist of six persons, to be chosen by the governor, out of twelve nominated by the inhabitants,† the vacancies being filled up by the governor, who selected one out of two persons nominated by the remaining councillors. A Court of Criminal Justice was established, to consist of six or more members, to be appointed by the council or court of policy. A court of civil justice was instituted, to consist of the governor, as president, and six members selected by him out of twelve persons nominated—one-half by the Court of Policy, and one-half by the inhabitants, three members to retire every two years. The governor was allowed only one vote. The Court of Policy was to take precedence of the Court of Justice and the individual members, severally one of the other, from the date of their appointments.

At the same time, the octroy empowered the directors to grant lands upon such terms and conditions as should appear to them proper. Another article empowered them to enact a capitation-tax, a weigh-tax, and a tonnage-tax.

The lands were at first given gratis to the settlers; but as this system produced more claims than could be

* Project Reglement dienende tot het Verzogte Octrooi. Hartsink, p. 347.
† This arrangement was afterwards altered.

entertained, it was proposed that a charge of 10 florins per acre be made, and the money so raised was called "acre-money" (akker geld genaamd). This acre-money was to become payable in fifteen years at ten different instalments, with the exception of the lands upon the east and west sea-coast, which were considered of so much greater value than the rest, and had latterly began to attract so much notice, that the acre-money there was made payable within twelve months in two instalments. At a subsequent period, in April, 1774, a plantation-tax was raised of 125 florins per annum from each estate, amounting in a few years to a large sum—about 125,000 florins—which was again distributed to the several plantations according to the number of the slaves on each. As the object of this proceeding is not very obvious, I transcribe the sentence in Dutch which refers to it: "De jaarlyksche opbrengs daar van is heden ten dage (1805), een Somme van 125,000 florins, die over alle de Plantagien, naar maate vau het getal der slaven, tot ieder dezelven behoorende, *wordt omgeslagen.*"*

The capitation-tax (fifty pounds of sugar, or cash equivalent, 50 stivers) was exacted indiscriminately from the whole population, both white and black, children under ten years of age being charged only half that amount. The weighage-tax, or toll, consisted of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. commission on all imports and exports; and the tonnage-tax, or duty, was about 3 florins per "last" on the burden of ships; besides these, an excise duty was charged on every fifty pounds of sugar exported.

The directors were required to provide the colonists with a predikant, schoolmaster, and reader, but were only partially to contribute to their support; a free

* Verhaal van Berbice, p. 8.

table at the commandant's, besides a keg of brandy, and half a pipe of wine, were allowed to the predikant.

The colonists were enjoined to employ one white person for every fifteen slaves, and the transport of such white persons was limited to the sum of 30 guilders.

Again, all sugars and other produce shipped were required to be marked with the name of the estate which produced it, and directed to be sent to no other place than Holland.

From the consideration of these important measures in the history of the colony, it will be evident that society had now began to assume a more settled state. On the 22nd April, in the year 1733, Bernhard Waterham was installed as the first governor of Berbice, to carry out those new measures of government which were destined to influence the character not only of Berbice, but of its sister settlement, for many years to follow.

From the commencement of the directory in 1720, to the year 1732, when these changes were introduced, the settlement does not appear to have had a very full or regular tide of prosperity. It would seem that the sum of 54,235 guilders 10 stivers only had been shared by the proprietors, and that this had given rise to much dissatisfaction; and two years after the establishment of the constitution, it was found that the planters could not support the new rate of taxes, and consequently a temporary exemption from taxation was granted to them. In the same year, 1734, upon the representation of the sugar refiners of Holland, the refining of sugar was prohibited in the colony. Notwithstanding these circumstances, however, the influx of strangers under the new government produced so great a demand for land, that it was found necessary to adopt a stringent

regulation, by which all future purchasers were restricted to plantations not exceeding 2000 acres in extent.

The increased and increasing population led insensibly to many social changes. A number of new houses were erected near the fort, and it was proposed to fortify Crab Island, but this had been objected to by the former commander of the river, Mr. Tierens, and upon the recommendation of the engineer, Osterlein, the old fort situated there was reconstructed and put in better order.

In 1735 the first predikant, Jan Christian Frauendorf, arrived in the settlement of Berbice. It had been stipulated that he should be supported by a tax of 25 guilders from each plantation, which it was calculated would afford him a salary of about 800 guilders, besides his residence and free living at the governor's table, his annual keg of brandy, and his pipe of wine. This arrangement, however, was found to be practically inconvenient, and it underwent some modification. The salary of the predikant was fixed at a sum of 900 guilders yearly, which he received from the colony; a house was built for him to reside in near the fort; and, instead of boarding with the governor, he was allowed an additional sum of 300 guilders to keep his own table. In addition to this officer, a clerk and schoolmaster was also imported, and received a salary of 300 guilders per annum. At the same time, a church fund was instituted, and was supported by a grant from the general funds of the colony. Various other acts of importance were effected about this period in Berbice. For the further introduction of slaves, the want of whom was greatly felt, an arrangement was made with the West India Company whereby 500 slaves were to be brought from the coast of Guinea. The inhabitants, also, profiting by the example of Surinam, which at that time served as a sort of model colony, de-

termined upon raising a militia force. Four companies of free persons were organised and trained in the use of arms; and as a further means of protecting the infant colony from assaults (internal as well as external), the troops of the garrison were augmented from 150 to 200 men. For the convenience of the inhabitants, a tavern or hotel was erected close to the fort, and the hotel-keeper was prohibited from receiving any produce in payment under a heavy penalty. The attempt to re-establish a brickery was also renewed, but, although partially successful, never prospered to the desired extent. For the better administration of the goods of deceased persons, and for the benefit of minors and orphans, an Orphan Chamber (Weeskamer) was instituted, and subsequently became a very important office in these colonies.

The appointment of director or superintendent of the plantations was an office which dated from about this period, but as the remuneration attending it was found inadequate, it was decreed that in future the person who filled it should have a seat in the Court of Policy.

Some difference having arisen between the directors of the colony and the members of the company in 1738, it was determined to raise the number of the former from seven to nine persons, which was accordingly done in the month of July of that year.

Following the example set them by the colonists in Surinam, the settlers in Berbice cultivated plantations of sugar, coffee, cocoa, and cotton along the river and the numerous branches or creeks. The cultivation of tobacco also was attended to, for on the 22nd of October, 1738, a duty of 2 penningen per lb. was levied upon its introduction in the states of Holland.

With a view to increase the facility of communication throughout the different plantations along these wild

districts, a pathway was formed between Fort Nassau and the river Canje. It was found impossible to construct roads along the banks of the river and between the plantations; hence the communication was kept up chiefly by water, while a few narrow and indistinct footpaths were tracked out between some of the most important posts and habitations.

CHAPTER VI.

INSURRECTION IN BERBICE—INSUBORDINATION OF TROOPS—PARTIAL INSTANCES OF REBELLION AMONG THE SLAVES—COMMENCEMENT OF THE INSURRECTION OF 1763—GOVERNOR VAN HOGENHEIM'S MEASURES TO SUPPRESS IT—FAILURE OF HIS PLANS—PROGRESS OF THE INSURRECTION—ABANDONMENT OF FORT NASSAU—RESISTANCE OF SETTLERS AGAINST THE NEGROES—ARRIVAL OF TROOPS FROM SURINAM—GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION—MILITARY AND NAVAL EXPEDITION PREPARED IN HOLLAND—INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO COLONEL DE SALVE—HIS ARRIVAL IN BERBICE—FORT NASSAU RE-OCCUPIED—REBELS ATTACKED, CAPTURED, TRIED, AND EXECUTED—TROOPS RETURN TO HOLLAND—GOVERNOR RESIGNS—CONDITION OF THE COLONY AFTER THE INSURRECTION.

Ever since the introduction of the slaves into the colony of Berbice, they had shown an indisposition to labour, which rendered coercive measures unavoidable; and the severity with which they were consequently treated led to several ineffectual attempts to escape their misery by absconding from the plantations, and, in some instances, to open revolt. In 1733 and 1734 partial rebellions broke out, but were easily suppressed by the energy and promptitude of Governor Waterham, who, up to the period of his death in 1749, appears to have preserved the colony in a state of comparative security. He was succeeded by John Andries Lossner on the 8th April, 1749, who was displaced in less than a month by the appointment of John Frederic Collier. These changes were not calculated to tranquillise the settlement, or to produce a feeling of confidence amongst the settlers; and accordingly we find, that during Collier's administration

the insubordination spread from the slaves to the Dutch soldiers, who now began to betray impatience of the rigorous discipline to which they were subjected in controlling the outbreaks of the negroes.

In **1751** some fifteen or sixteen soldiers tried to escape from the fort, but were captured, and cast into a loathsome prison overrun with snakes and rats. By the verdict of a court-martial the principal culprit was sentenced to be hanged; but that degrading death was spared him, and he was ordered to be shot. The ringleaders were banished from the colony and sent to New England, and the rest subjected to other punishments.* In **1752** another revolt took place on plantation Switzerland, but it was speedily suppressed, and the leader of it drowned himself.

On the 5th December, **1755**, a new governor, Hendrick Jan van Ryswick, was appointed. Fresh instances of violence continued to betray the unsettled condition of the military. Anthony Kragh, a soldier who had been implicated in the late attempt at escape, was found concerned, along with a Boor who had been expelled for bad conduct, in the murder of an old man, Peter de Raad. They were, however, discovered by the detection of some coin which was known to have belonged to the deceased, tried, put to torture, and, after confessing their guilt, the criminals were broken on the wheel. The Boor left behind him a wife and children, who were sent to New England, where the eldest daughter soon after contracted an advantageous marriage in New York.

In **1759** a fatal duel took place between two of the soldiers, who fought with bayonets. They were both foreigners—the one French, the other Italian. In the rencontre the latter was mortally wounded, and the survivor was brought to trial and executed—an example

* Hartsink.

of severity demanded by the disorderly state of the military. About this period, or a little earlier, a malignant fever broke out among the white inhabitants, and carried off great numbers. On this occasion the mortality among the troops was so extensive, that in 1762 the whole garrison amounted to scarcely twenty in number. These circumstances gave increased confidence to the mutinous slaves, and a body of them taking advantage of the absence of the proprietor of a plantation, they attacked the dwelling-house, ransacked and burnt it, and effected their escape up the river, bidding defiance to the resistance offered at the post and other places. The news having reached the fort, Lieutenant Thielen, a corporal, and twelve soldiers, assisted by some militia, proceeded in search of the rebels, and tracing them to the bush, attacked them twice, but were defeated, and obliged to retire with the loss of several killed and taken prisoners. A heavy retribution, however, awaited the insurgents. The soldiers retreated to an ambuscade, where they awaited the negroes, and in the conflict which ensued many slaves were killed, others dispersed, and a few of them were taken prisoners. There was no mercy for these unfortunate men.' The general safety required extreme measures, and the prisoners were executed. But these severities were not successful in checking the disaffection. In the same year insurrectionary meetings were discovered on three plantations in Berbice, but fortunately in sufficient time to arrest the plans of the conspirators, whose designs were thus to all appearance annihilated. The cautious vigilance of the Dutch had extinguished the flame, but their tyranny had kept alive the embers, and in the following year, 1763, a terrible insurrection burst out, which convulsed the whole colony, and threatened its very existence.

The number of slaves at this time in Berbice was

about 3000, of the whites about 100.* The insurrection commenced upon plantation Magdalenenburg, on the river Canje, where some of the slaves, about seventy-three in number, appeared in open rebellion. They murdered the director or manager, André Fourie Niffens den Timmerman, and seizing upon all the arms they could find, proceeded to the next plantation, Providence. The director, however, having heard of their approach, escaped with two of his people to the plantation Petersburg. Disappointed of their victim, the rebels plundered the house, and being joined by other negroes, crossed the river Canje, with the intention of reaching Surinam. When the governor, Van Hogenheim (who had been appointed in 1760), was informed of the revolt, he despatched a body of sailors from some of the merchant ships, under command of a mate (having no soldiers he could employ on such a service), with strict orders to go overland to the river Canje and to post themselves securely on the line of attack. The expedition, however, was fruitless, for after remaining several days in the neighbourhood, the sailors discovered that the negroes had decamped. In the month of March several other plantations were attacked by the slaves, the houses fired, and some of the whites murdered. In consequence of these alarming circumstances, the governor ordered the slave-ship *Adriana Petronella*, Cock, master, with thirty strong and well-armed people, to sail up the river Berbice, for the purpose of succouring the whites, who with their families had fled, terror-stricken, from their lands. But, instead of proceeding at once to the rescue of the distressed fugitives, the master cast anchor shortly after he had left the fort on the pretence of taking charge of some moveable property belonging to the neighbouring estates. The inhabitants of the town of New Amster-

* Hartsink.

dam, hearing that the rebels were advancing to the fort, took advantage of the opportunity to convey goods on board of three of the vessels in the river, in which they also took refuge themselves. These ships had been moored off the fort by orders of the governor, to assist it in case of need. The fort itself was so badly garrisoned, that only eight soldiers and about ten citizens composed the force. In spite of the renewed orders of the governor, the master of the slave-ship remained in this state of inactivity, and application being made to the master of another vessel to undertake the attempt, he refused, on the ground that his pilot and some of his sailors were absent, and the others sick. Meanwhile, the unfortunate planters up the river had shut themselves up in a house, which they fortified as well as they could, where they defended themselves against several attacks from the negroes, who loudly proclaimed their determination to hunt every white man out of Berbice, and to take possession of their estates. Finding further resistance impossible, they capitulated with the slaves, and begged for permission to pass out to their boats so that they might embark in the ships. To this proposal the insurgents treacherously consented; but scarcely had the miserable planters and their families entered the boats, than the negroes fired on them, killing several, and wounding and making prisoners of others. A few alone escaped the carnage, and took to flight in despair. The wretched captives were brutally insulted, and many of them deliberately murdered; others committed suicide in anticipation of their fate. The news of this horrible catastrophe reached the fort through a mulatto, Jan Broer, and was shortly after confirmed by the Predikant Ramring, his wife, and sister, who, "as a man who spoke with God," had been spared by the rebels. They commissioned him, however, to acquaint the governor that

the cause of this revolt originated in the cruel and wicked conduct of some of the planters. Many other settlers from different parts of the colony came flying into the town, naked and destitute, to seek shelter in the fort, or on board of the ships.

The revolt had now become general. Under such disastrous circumstances the governor, Van Hogenheim, convened an extraordinary meeting of the principal inhabitants to consider the best means of acting under such difficulties, and also despatched a trusty messenger to the governor of Surinam, praying for succour and relief. Upon inspecting the fort and general means of defence, the former was found in such a deplorable condition as to preclude all hope of its being rendered effectually serviceable; and measures were taken, under a report from the principal military and militia officers, for the purpose of repairing and strengthening it. Another report contained a plan of general defence. They suggested that the inhabitants who had taken refuge on board the ships should be ordered to return into the fort, and not allowed to go out without express permission; and that the masters of the four principal ships should be directed to place themselves in such a manner as to give the best assistance to the fort. Two of the ship captains consented to this arrangement, a third pleaded sickness in excuse, and the fourth pleaded that his orders required him to leave the colony as soon as possible, to proceed either to St. Eustace or elsewhere. A letter was shortly afterwards forwarded to the governor from two of the ringleaders, Cuffy and Accara, warning him to depart at once with the white inhabitants and their ships, leaving the colony to the negroes, who had been driven to this measure by repeated cruelties and injustice, and who, if resistance was continued to be offered to them, would compel their masters to evacuate the territory. To this demand the

governor returned an answer, not with the intention of entering into correspondence with the rebels, but merely to gain time. By this time the negroes had organised themselves into a regular government, had established a complete system of military discipline, and had chosen Cuffy, a young slave of courage and judgment, as their governor. A rumour having prevailed that the rebels were advancing to the fort in great numbers, the Dutch inhabitants took alarm, and addressed a letter, dated the 7th March, to the governor, requesting leave to depart on board the ships, since the fort was incapable of affording them protection; stating further that the slaves were already in possession of the whole of the settlement up the river Berbice, and to the number of 600 were carrying fire and destruction along with them. This request was peremptorily refused by the governor and military officers, who advised that they should remain in the fort until assistance could be obtained; but the militia officers having sided with the colonists, and the question being asked of the military whether they alone felt themselves equal to the task of resisting the rebels, and being answered in the negative, it was at length finally determined on the 8th March that the fort should be abandoned and set on fire, whilst the unfortunate inhabitants retreated to their ships. These latter, with the colonists on board, having retired out of danger, a lieutenant, corporal, and two men were left to execute the blowing up of Fort Nassau, which being accomplished, they reached the ships in a boat left behind for that purpose. A negro, named Simon, was likewise despatched on horseback to the neighbouring settlements on the river Canje to acquaint the planters with the determination and conduct of the colonists in Berbice, but he found that they had all fled from their plantations and retired towards the sea-coast. The ships as they

passed found nearly the whole plantations along the river in possession of the rebels. Upon one only the slaves were still faithful, and on being asked to co-operate in the general defence, they came on board and joined the colonists. Several skirmishes took place between the ships and the insurgent negroes, who repeatedly fired on them. One or two white inhabitants were happily rescued as the ships proceeded down the river. A letter was soon after received by the governor from a burgher captain of Canje, stating that the inhabitants of that district had reached Fort Saint Andries on the coast, and praying for assistance and provisions that they might be enabled to hold out. The ships having arrived at plantation Dageraat, cast anchor, whilst the governor and many of the colonists went on shore, finding that the negroes on that estate were peaceably inclined, and attending to their work. It was furthermore determined, after mature consideration, to make a halt here, for the situation of the estate was most favourable to resist any attack on the part of the insurgents, being protected in front by the river and ships, and inland by a marshy and almost impassable waste.

One of the ships was ordered to the mouth of the river Canje, to prevent any sally on the part of the rebels, as well as to cover the entrance of the river Berbice. But the ship captains refused to accede to the propositions made to them, although the governor and council addressed them, and promised to hold them harmless of the consequences. In spite of all commands they persisted in sailing down the river, and the governor and colonists were obliged to join them, especially as some of the ships' companies had shown a disposition to be unruly.

On the next day, the 12th of March, the anchors were raised, and they journeyed onwards, learning soon after

that a revolt had taken place on plantation Dageraat, where the negroes had joined the insurgents.

On the 16th, the ships arrived at Fort St. Andries, and found the inmates entirely unprotected, and in a wretched state of destitution. The power of the governor to render any help under these deplorable circumstances was shattered by insubordination amongst his own people. All authority and discipline was at an end. Two of the ship captains actually made preparations to set sail, which they did shortly after, in spite of all remonstrances, taking with them all those who refused to subject themselves to the orders of the governor and council. They likewise carried away some of the private property of the afflicted planters, besides many of the papers and other public documents belonging to the civil officers and the establishments of the colony.

Thus deserted, the remaining military, militia, and citizens, formed themselves into a disciplined corps, and determined to fortify their position, and abide the result. They were joined by other refugees; and, on the 28th of March, the brigantine *Betsy* arrived at Fort St. Andries, from Surinam, with about 100 soldiers under Captains Ryssel and Texier. The governor immediately assembled the military and burgher soldiers, sending six of the latter and twenty-five of the former, under Lieutenant Knollard, to the Canje; while he directed a sergeant and twenty-five soldiers to garrison and protect the fort, and proceeded himself with the remainder to plantation Dageraat. One of the ships, under Captain Ramels, was placed at the mouth of the Canje; another, under Pynappel, was left to guard the fort; whilst the two others were ordered to accompany the expedition up the Berbice.

On the 31st of March the ships arrived at plantation Dageraat, the estates in their course having been occa-

sionally inspected and visited; while a few prisoners were taken, and several of the rebels wounded and shot. Having disposed of the troops and vessels in the most serviceable manner, they were now prepared for the attack, which they hourly apprehended, and which took place on the 2nd of April. The slaves mustered 600 strong. They were, however, repulsed, and many of them killed. The brigantine *Betsy* was shortly after ordered back to Surinam; and some of the other ships, with a few of the colonists, departed for Holland, conveying letters from the governor to their high mightinesses and to the directors. While these proceedings were going forward another communication was received from Cuffy, the leader or governor of the rebels, who requested a parley with the governor, declaring that the negroes would be satisfied with the half of Berbice, but that they never would consent to be slaves any longer. To this the governor made some indefinite reply; and in this manner several letters and messages were interchanged.

Information was received from the post at St. Andries that, on the 3rd of May, two well-armed barks had arrived from St. Eustace; one bringing eighty, and the other sixty-six people; and further, that another vessel was in sight.

Finding himself thus strengthened, the governor held a council of war, when it was resolved that the assistance of the native Indians (who had already shown a disposition to fight against the rebel negroes) should be sought for, as without them it would be impossible to prevent the negroes, when beaten, from escaping and taking refuge in the woods. Whereupon the governor wrote to the commandant of Essequebo, and to the postholder on the Corentyn, requesting their co-operation and assistance.

On the 7th of May the largest of the two barks, named

the *Seven Provinces,* dropped her anchor at plantation Dageraat. She was commanded by Captain Hendricks, and was armed with ten 4-pounders, and twelve arquebuses; having also about thirty men from the other bark (which was left at Fort St. Andries), and being well furnished with ammunition and provisions. In consequence of this timely assistance, a proclamation was issued, calling upon the loyal slaves to join the whites, and offering the following premiums:

For every living negro rebel, the sum of . . .	50	guilders.	
For every right-hand of one slain	20	„	
For every man and woman who acted faithfully	10	„	
And the children of these, each	2	„	and 10 stivers.

To those who should restore any stolen or other property—such as monies, jewels, clothes, &c.—to the proper officers, were to receive half the value of the several articles.

For the apprehension of the negro Cuffy, a reward of 500 guilders was offered; and for the negro Accara, who acted as captain, 400 guilders. This proclamation was dated, at the post at plantation Dageraat, 8th of May, 1763.

On the 13th of the same month, another singular proclamation was issued by way of encouragement to the troops of the expedition, in order to encourage their zeal. It set forth the following extraordinary list of pensions:

Pension for the loss of	two	eyes,	the sum of	1500	guilders.
„	„	one eye	„	350	„
„	„	both arms	„	1500	„
„	„	right arm	„	450	„
„	„	left arm	„	350	„
„	„	both hands	„	1200	„
„	„	right hand	„	350	„
„	„	left hand	„	300	„
„	„	both legs	„	700	„
„	„	one leg	„	350	„
„	„	both feet	„	450	„
„	„	one foot	„	200	„ *

* Hartsink.

Shortly after the arrival of the other bark from St. Eustace at Dageraat, on the 11th of May, a determined attack by the rebels, who now mustered about 2000 or 3000, was made on the post, but was bravely resisted by the Dutch, who killed a great many, and dispersed the rest. The heavy guns from the ships did terrible execution, whilst among the Dutch four or five only were killed, and a few others wounded. The governor himself had a narrow escape, a ball having perforated his coat; considerable damage, however, was done to the post, the negroes having destroyed part of it by fire at the first assault. Several parties were sent in search of the fugitive rebels, but soon returned with little success. The Indians, who had been everywhere treated very badly by the insurgents, gradually assembled, and took service under the Dutch, who set them to track the course and haunts of the insurgents. Several of the slaves at the post and neighbourhood of Dageraat, who were considered favourable to the whites, had absconded, or were made prisoners by the rebels, whose confidence, however, was beginning to be shaken by the want of provisions, and by dissensions amongst themselves. A new chief had been chosen to supersede Cuffy. His name was Atta; and this man gained over to his side nearly all the partisans of his rival, Cuffy, who, first hiding the powder which had been placed under his charge to prevent it from falling into the hands of his enemies, shot himself, and thus escaped the vengeance of those who sought to murder him.

On the 19th of June, the ship *Hendrick*, Captain Rolwagen, arrived at the mouth of the river Berbice; having on board the new fiscal and secretary, L. Fick; two surgeons, some soldiers, a smith, and five other persons; some of whom immediately proceeded up to Dageraat. On the 7th of July another ship, the *De-*

merara Welfare, Captain Salvolarie, a Greek, sent by the governor of St. Eustace, De Wind, arrived at Dageraat with about forty men, and some provisions; but, at the same time, the spirits of the colonists were depressed by the sickness and mortality which prevailed among the troops and sailors; and likewise by the intelligence that, in consequence of a quarrel over certain booty which had been obtained from the rebels, about seventy soldiers who had arrived from Surinam had deserted their posts, and joined the rebels in Canje, with the intention of proceeding to the Orinoco; but in this they were defeated; they quarrelled among themselves, and were obliged to give up their arms to the negroes, who suspected them, and shot several. The others they spared, in order to make them useful. Among the mutineers was a surgeon, who proved very serviceable to the rebels. Most of them were in the end recaptured by the soldiers, and endeavoured to pass themselves off as prisoners in the hands of the negroes, but were, however, tried and executed.

During this month (July) several skirmishes took place, but nothing of decisive importance transpired; information was received from Essequebo of the approach of some Indians, who had already attacked the rebels.

Unfortunately, the sickness among the Dutch prevailed so heavily up to the month of August, that it was determined to sail towards the sea-coast; one of the barks alone had lost forty-five people, and the governor and many officers were also ill.

The troops, for the most part composed of French runaways and people of indifferent character, could scarcely be said to be under the control of their officers, who were themselves as impatient as their soldiers to return to the sea-side, and to leave the post of Dageraat

to its fate. The greater part of the colonists joined in this view; but the governor, in spite of every obstacle, determined to keep his position with as many of the people as he could persuade to remain with him. The post was in a most defenceless state, and might now have been easily carried by an assault; but it appeared afterwards that the rebels were in a state of great confusion and want. The scarcity of provisions was alarming; they were reduced to eat horses and dogs, and many quarrels took place among them; nevertheless, a few occasional attempts were made in the neighbourhood to intimidate the whites. Sad accounts were shortly after received by the governor from Fort St. Andries; one of the captains placed there (Hattinga) having left his post, and disappeared with his company. He had been latterly very drunken, and great fears were entertained for his safety. Several soldiers had also quitted their posts and absconded; rewards were offered for their capture, which proved unavailing, although some trusty negroes and the faithful Indians pursued them with diligence.

In this state of alarm and uncertainty, the affairs of the settlements continued during the months of August and September.

On the 3rd of October a memorial was addressed to the governor from Major Ewyk and Captains Ryssel and Fexier, strongly urging the necessity of abandoning the position at Dageraat, and concentrating the forces on the river Canje; but the governor, Hogenheim, was resolute in maintaining his stand as long as he could, having provided for a retreat to St. Andries in case of necessity.

The intelligence of the revolt of the slaves in Berbice having eventually reached Holland, through Captain Spruyt from Surinam, and Richard Roberts from Esse-

quebo, the directors of this colony, as well as a number of other proprietors and persons interested in its welfare, addressed themselves, on June 8th, to the States-General, praying that his high mightiness would grant two frigates and a body of disciplined troops, in order that they might at once proceed to quell the insurrection. Application was made to the Admiralty College for any ships which might be at their disposal, and troops were sought for at the hands of the Duke of Brunswick. The latter raised two battalions of volunteers from the different regiments, besides engineers, artillerymen, and workmen; to whose equipment and transport the councillors of state granted a requisition of about 706,000 guilders. The officers were induced to join by a promise of promotion on their return.

The command of the expedition was given to Colonel de Salve, who had under him, as officers in the first battalion, Major de Brau, Captain Lutteke, Captain La Croix, Captain Blank, and Captain Lyburg; second battalion, Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas, Major Pusch, Captain Tourgund, Captain Mouchy, Captain Douglas, and Captain Tisbach; besides 72 under-officers, 468 privates, 12 drummers, and 40 artillerymen, in all.

The Admiralty also furnished the *Zephyr*, with 110 men, under Captain L. H. van Oyen; and the Admiralty of Amsterdam equipped the frigate *Dolphin*, with twenty-four guns, under Captain Evert Bisdom. There were besides six transports to convey the troops; viz., four ships of three masts, and two smaller vessels. The following instructions were then given to Colonel de Salve:

1st. Colonel de Salve to take command of the expedition lying in the Texel, and to proceed as soon as possible to Surinam and Berbice.

2nd. The ships to keep company as they best can; and in case of separation to have a place of rendezvous, with the necessary signals.

3rd. In case of separation, no time to be lost in seeking the other vessels; but, as many as can, to proceed on their course direct.

4th. The commander-in-chief to arrive first at the rendezvous of Surinam, if practicable.

5th. Upon his arrival at Surinam he must communicate with the governor and council as to the state of the colony of Berbice, and, after leaving directions for any absent vessel, shall proceed to act for the immediate relief of Berbice. After having remained eight days at Surinam, to await any dilatory ships, and to consult with the governor and council as to the best mode of offering assistance to those in need of it.

6th. Likewise, he shall communicate as soon as possible after his arrival at Surinam with the governor of Berbice and other officers, forwarding a copy of the resolutions of his high mightiness of the 5th of August.

7th. Upon his arrival at Berbice he shall consult with the commanding officer, and with the governor, as to the plan to be pursued in subduing the insurgent slaves.

8th. After such consultation he shall take the necessary steps to fortify and defend the several posts of the colony.

9th. In case of requiring the use of any colony boats or negroes, he shall agree to hire the same at stated rates from the hands of the governor and council.

10th. In case he should think it necessary to undertake operations against the rebels from the side of Surinam, Essequebo, or Demerara, he shall detach vessels and troops to these points.

11th. He shall on his arrival as soon as possible

debark the troops, and land and secure the ammunition, stores, and provisions.

12th. He shall appoint officers and under-officers as commissaries, to superintend and be accountable for such ammunition and stores.

13th. In payment of the necessary expenses, bills of exchange shall be drawn upon the solicitors Heeneman and De Vrieu, of Gravenhage, who will, upon receipt of such, transmit the necessary monies.

14th. In case the commanding officer shall require more troops, or other assistance, he shall forward an application to Holland for the same.

15th. He shall also report upon the condition and number of the forts necessary for the defence, as well external as internal of the colony.

16th. He shall with every suitable opportunity furnish a report of the affairs of the colony, and provide for the speedy reception of orders addressed to him by way of Surinam.

17th. He shall avoid, and cause to be avoided, all occasions of dispute between himself, his officers, and those of the local government, and shall execute all services required of him in friendly concert.

18th. All ceremonies between the military and naval officers to be so conducted as to avoid unpleasant consequences.

19th. He shall appoint to any vacant situations which may occur in the service, subject to our approval.

20th. He shall act faithfully for the peaceful interest of the colony, and shall remain there until further orders.

Dated Gravenhage, 1st of October, 1763. *

The squadron sailed on the 6th of November, 1763;

* Hartsink.

and arrived on the 19th of December at Surinam, with the exception of the ship *George Hendrick*, under Captain Visser, on board of which was Major Pusch, and three companies. On the 26th of December they again weighed anchor, and sailed for the Berbice.

Meanwhile the governor had received a letter, on the 28th of October, from Captain Haringman, of the ship *Martensdyk*, which had arrived at the mouth of the river Berbice from Holland, and waited the means and opportunity to sail up the river.

On the 3rd of November, Lieutenant Prys and forty men, besides a volunteer named Baron Kinkel, arrived at Dageraat, stating that the vessel under Captain Haringman was at anchor at Fort St. Andries; but that the commander, hearing of the sickness up the river, hesitated to sail up, and requested a conference with the Governor Hogenheim, who was invited on board. He, accordingly, proceeded to the ship at Fort St. Andries, leaving the post at Dageraat in charge of Lieutenant Smit. After some stay and conference with Captain Haringman, they returned to Dageraat together, and a council of war was held with the other officers as to the safest way to deliver the colony; at length it was decided that an attack should be commenced on the river Canje. Following up this plan, two schooners and a bark, well equipped and armed, were sent up the Canje. For this purpose the colony contributed three officers, five sergeants, two corporals, one surgeon, and seventy men; and the frigate *St. Martin*, with two officers, one sergeant, and ninety-three men. The post at Dageraat was guarded by a force of fifty men under Lieutenant Smit, and protected on the river side by the two barks from St. Eustace, ordered there. The governor himself, about the 8th of November, took charge of the expedition up the Canje. Having sailed up the river, and occasionally

chasing the negroes, they anchored, on the 13th of November, off plantation Don Carlos; and a detachment of 100 men, under Lieutenant Thielen and two other officers, had orders to scour the country in the direction of the lately abandoned Fort Nassau.

Proceeding next to Stevensburg plantation, they were rejoined by the detachment under Lieutenant Thielen, who had dispersed some rebels, but had made no prisoners. The post here was strengthened by a force of 106 men under Lieutenant Thielen; and the Governor Hogenheim and Captain Haringman shortly after returned to Fort St. Andries, and on the 19th of November reached Dageraat, where he found everything in confusion; several buildings in the neighbourhood burnt down, and the troops suffering from sickness. But gratifying intelligence soon compensated for his disappointment. Information was received from Governor Gravesande, of Essequebo, stating that two ships from Zealand had arrived with about seventy soldiers, whom he could readily spare for the protection of Berbice; moreover, that the Indians had gained some victories over the rebellious slaves; and shortly after, the additional good news was received of the arrival at Berbice of three company's ships, under Captains Dakam, Kraay, and Kamp, bringing ninety soldiers sent by the directors from Holland. Again, on the 3rd and 5th of December, arrived the frigate *Dolphine*, Captain Bisdom, with 150 men, and twenty-two guns; and the *Zephyr*, Captain Van Oyen, with 110 men, and twelve guns; bringing also the joyful intelligence that an additional force of 600 men were shortly to be expected, under Colonel de Salve, sent by his high mightiness for the relief of Berbice.

Before the arrival of this latter aid, it was determined to attempt a general attack upon the rebels; and the

ships, barks, and boats, were stationed in such situations as would prevent the negroes, when assailed by land, from escaping by water. The troops were also disposed of in companies to proceed up the rivers, and to land upon the most commodious estates. The whole force was ready on the 18th of December, and next day were ordered to commence operations.

On the 19th, information was received from St. Andries of the death of Captain Van Ryssel, and the arrival of a slave-ship with 300 negroes, under Captain Bruyn. The governor, notwithstanding, proceeded up the river Berbice with a large force of ships and troops, and found most of the plantations abandoned and burnt. On arriving at the old site of Fort Nassau and New Amsterdam, they found every house destroyed, except the Lutheran church and the house of the predikant; the rebels fearing to trouble these lest the Almighty should be angry. Having landed here some troops, under Lieutenant Smit, the governor and Captain Haringman proceeded up the river, and, reaching the creek Wironje, found the church and the house of the predikant at this post uninjured. As yet few of the rebels had been discovered, occasionally several of them voluntarily surrendered, or were taken prisoners; but the greater body of the insurgents retreated at the approach of the ships and troops; most of the plantations along their course were visited, but were found deserted, and the greater part of the buildings burned or destroyed. Upon reaching the creek Wikkie, the governor was led to suppose that a large force of the rebels had assembled at plantation Hardenbroch, a little way up that stream; and a strong detachment was ordered to proceed up the creek in boats, and attack the enemy. Lieutenant Smit and his party arrived first, but immediately on their approach were fired upon by the negroes, who had lain

in ambush; and that gallant officer, Lieutenant Thielen, and Ensign Rees, were all three killed, besides several others severely wounded. The troops, however, returned the fire, and succeeded in landing, driving the rebels before them, and taking possession of the post at plantation Hardenboch; here, after exploring the neighbourhood, and capturing a few slaves, a body of troops was left under Sergeant Hopvaal, and the governor and party proceeded up the river Berbice, as far as Lavorrette, where they landed on the 29th of December, and joined the troops already stationed there, who had in several excursions killed many of the rebels, and taken numerous prisoners, amongst others the runaway soldier Jean Renard.

The whole river, from its mouth to the plantation Lavorrette, about 100 miles, having now been searched, the several estates visited, and the insurgent slaves routed, the governor determined to retrace his steps. A detachment of about forty-five men, under command of Captain Slavorinus, was left at plantation Lavorrette, whilst the bark *Seven Provinces*, with thirty-two men, was ordered to remain in the river opposite that estate by way of protection, in case of necessity. Having made these arrangements, Hogenheim embarked on board of the *Hope*, and sailed down the river on the 31st of December.

Upon his route he received a letter from Colonel de Salve, announcing his arrival with six transports, and 600 men, in the river Berbice, and expressing his desire to hold a consultation as to the necessary measures of attack. The meeting for this purpose took place at a post where a church and some buildings yet remained. Having again reached the creek Wikkie, the governor communicated with the people at plantation Hardenbroch, and sent up a strong party, under Lieutenant

Crombie, to pursue and capture the rebels who had taken refuge higher up, which was affirmed by several slaves who surrendered themselves, and who appeared glad to place themselves once again under the protection of the Dutch. A young lady, who had fortunately made her escape from the rebels, also confirmed this statement. Leaving a sergeant and fourteen men at post Hardenbroch, the governor sailed down the river as far as the creek Wironje, where he found the officer in charge, and most of the soldiers, ill and unfit for duty. Information was soon after received that Colonel Salve, with his force, had entered the river, and that already two of the transports had reached the post at Dageraat, where he had met and consulted with Captain Haringman. The governor having now reached the site of Fort Nassau and New Amsterdam, met there the two Captains Bisdom and Van Oyen, who proceeded with him at once to meet Colonel de Salve. It was determined at this meeting to occupy immediately the post in Canje; and for this purpose three companies under Major Pusch were despatched, and orders given to Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas to station himself at Fort St. Andries, and forward the necessary stores and troops to reinforce the colony troops already posted on the Canje. The governor, with his two captains and a Dutch engineer, De Vrye, returned to inspect the ruins of the late town and fort; and it was determined, as soon as possible, to reconstruct and fortify the same. Five companies, under Major de Brauw, were ordered up the river Berbice to relieve the colony troops at the creeks Wikkie and Wironje and plantation Lavorrette.

Thus four companies remained at head-quarters near the ruins of Fort Nassau, where only the church and predikant's house were found, and were converted into barracks; three companies were sent, as stated, to Canje;

one company occupied the church in the creek Wironje; three companies were posted at the creek Wikkie; and one company and a half occupied the distant settlement at Lavorrette. Open communication was kept up between these several stations, and artillery and surgeons, with the necessary stores, were divided among them. It was also determined that three of the ships of war should return to Holland, as the expense of keeping them was very great, and their services appeared now unnecessary. Colonel de Salve at first opposed this proposition, but eventually acceded to it. Governor Hogenheim having arrived at Dageraat on the 9th of January, 1764, found the troops posted there very sickly, and that many of them had died.

Whilst here, he received intelligence from the several posts, especially from that on the creek Wikkie, where much fighting had taken place between the troops and rebels; the latter being defeated, and many taken prisoners, with some loss on the part of the Dutch. On the 24th of January, Colonel de Salve took up his head-quarters at old Fort Nassau; the artillery and stores were landed, and preparations were made for rebuilding the town and fort. Information having been received that Atta and other ringleaders were in the neighbourhood of creek Wikkie, an expedition of about 160 men, under Captain Van Oyen, proceeded in search of them, but failed in the attempt. A number of penitent or trusty negroes were now employed to trace out the remaining rebels, and to assist in their capture; and for the next two months several expeditions were made against the insurgent slaves, wherever they could be met with in sufficient numbers. The Congo negroes, who, in several instances, had committed the horrible brutality of eating some of their victims, were more especially sought after.

On the 17th of March orders were issued by the commander-in-chief to recal some of the troops stationed on the river Canje, where very few of the rebels now lingered, and to station them on the Berbice, where every week many of the negroes were captured, or surrendered. A great many of the prisoners, after a formal trial by the governor and council, were condemned to death; some to be hanged, others to be burnt, and a few to be broken on the wheel. The rebel chief, Atta, was discovered and seized by some of the negroes who had joined the Dutch, and, along with several other ringleaders, was most cruelly tortured, and then tied to a stake and burnt, without one word of complaint. In fact, it was remarkable how callous and indifferent the rebels had become, not a sigh or groan escaping from them under the terrible vengeance of the victorious Dutch.

The exact number of those condemned to death and executed is not recorded. On the 16th of March twenty-three were sentenced to be hanged, sixteen to be broken on the wheel, and fifteen burnt; in all fifty-four.*

Many of the deserters from the Dutch service were also captured, and underwent various punishments after a kind of court-martial held in Paramaribo, on the 20th of July, 1764; the leaders of these mutineers were tortured, and afterwards executed.

Such was the close of this fearful drama, such the cruel retribution which the exasperated colonists wreaked on the principal instigators and abettors of this long and dreadful insurrection.

The insurgent slaves, long revelling in undisturbed possession of their spoils, were gradually dislodged from their strongholds, chased from creek to creek, from plantation to plantation, until hemmed in on all sides, shot down,

* Hartsink.

captured or dispersed, their noted chiefs betrayed and made prisoners, they gave up in despair the long-protracted contest with the white man, and once more submitted to the harness and drudgery of slavery. To many, indeed, it was a matter of satisfaction again to find themselves the well-provided dependents of the prudent planter, for the year of self-accomplished freedom had not passed without its trials, and anarchy, insecurity, famine, and exacted toil, had caused many openly to declare that they preferred the life of slavery under the white man, to the embittered liberty of their own creation.

Comparative order and security having followed the last act of the insurrection, Colonel de Salve wrote, on the 14th of August, to the governor and council, stating that he had received orders from the Duke of Brunswick to return immediately to Europe as soon as peace and tranquillity was restored to the colony of Berbice, the more especially as considerable sickness prevailed among the troops stationed in the different districts.

To this the governor and council replied, "That it was their belief that peace and tranquillity had been restored, and that the slaves in general had returned to the plantations, except a few secreted in the bush, who, however, would be soon captured; but that as to the suggestion of withdrawing the troops, they (the governor and council) feared that the military strength of the colony was too weak to prevent a recurrence of the late disasters, should the slaves be so inclined, when they saw the departure of the troops for Holland, and prayed that the colonel would leave a force of 100 effective men."

The following shows the amount of the population about this time :*

* Hartsink.

Whites (exclusive of the troops)	116
Male negroes	308
Female ditto	1317
Children	745
Total	2486

Colonel de Salve being desirous of making arrangements for his departure, found that the naval and military forces were in such a deplorable state from sickness, as to render it imperative on him to procure further assistance to work the ships. He accordingly wrote to the governor of St. Eustace, requesting him to forward a body of able seamen. The ship conveying these people was, however, wrecked among the islands, many of the sailors perished, and the remainder only reached Berbice on the 7th of November. Meanwhile, a ship, the *St. Martin*, sent from Holland with supplies for the troops, was lost off the mouth of the river Berbice, but her cargo fortunately was saved.

On the 16th of September another ship, the *Christina Maria*, arrived, and assisted in carrying back the troops. On the 2nd of October, 1764, four ships being in a condition to act as transports, the troops were embarked; but, owing to contrary winds and low tides, they did not get to sea until the 24th of November, with the detention, however, of one of the ships, the *Wakkerheid*, which parted her anchor and drove on a sand-bank. The intention of the commander was to have sailed to St. Eustace, but contrary winds compelled the transports to put into Curaçoa, where they arrived on the 4th of December; and the number of sick persons being very great, they were detained here until the 26th of January, 1765, when, being rejoined by the ship *Wakkerheid*, and the invalids having recovered on shore, they proceeded to Texel, where they arrived singly in

March, April, and May, and the troops forwarded to Bergen-op-Zoom, after their long and perilous campaign to the wild coast.

The troops which were left behind, at the request of the governor and council, consisted of one major, two captains, five under-officers, six sergeants, six corporals, two drummers, seventy privates, eight artillerymen, besides two surgeons; in all, 102.

Governor Hogenheim, who had removed the seat of government from Dageraat to New Amsterdam, on the 31st of October, 1764, issued a proclamation to the slaves, offering a free pardon to all those absent, and invited them to return to their duty as soon as possible, which induced many of them to deliver themselves up; a circumstance that afforded the most lively satisfaction.

The sickness among the troops having abated, many of the soldiers purchased their discharges, and accepted situations upon the different plantations, which began now to be renewed in cultivation.

In March, 1765, a vessel, the *Albertina Christina*, arrived in Berbice with a body of militia, hired by the directors of the colony to relieve the troops of the State which were left behind; but her condition was so bad that the major commanding the forces refused to go home in her, and sailed with his company in another ship, called the *States of Holland*, which left on the 29th of March, but, owing to contrary winds, did not reach St. Eustace until the 6th of May, whence it sailed on the 11th of June, and arrived in Texel on the 10th of August, the troops being forwarded to Bergen-op-Zoom.

Two penitent ringleaders of the revolt went to Holland with this expedition, and, receiving their pardon

at the hands of his high mightiness, were enrolled as soldiers under Colonel de Salve.

Governor Hogenheim having applied to the States-General to be relieved from the government of the colony, was promoted to the rank of major, and Heer Johannes Heyliger was appointed in his stead, and was succeeded, in April, 1768, by Stephen Hendrick de la Sabloniere.

Several plans for the protection and defence of the colony from within, as well as from without, were drawn by Major de Veye, and transmitted to his high mightiness, who submitted them to the directors of the colony; and about the year 1769 a stone fort was erected near the site of the former one, whilst wooden buildings of considerable strength and utility were constructed on the former site of New Amsterdam, which long served as head-quarters for the officers, officials, and troops.

The colony of Berbice was now managed by nine directors, chosen by the principal shareholders, besides a secretary and two book-keepers. The governor was elected by the directors of the colony, received a commission from his high mightiness, and governed the colony with the assistance of councils of policy, criminal and civil justice.

The principal officers of the colony were a fiscal and secretary; a college, composed of four officers, to administer to estates of orphans, besides marshals; a book-keeper and receiver-general of the colony plantations; a book-keeper for the soldiers' pay; a vendue master, and receiver of vendue money; an inspector of colony shops, and receiver of the commission money; a receiver of the capitation money and church contributions; a receiver of the weigh money; a receiver of the hospital tax; a receiver of the tonnage tax; a land-surveyor; a surgeon-major. The church council, or

vestry (kirken-raad), was composed of the predikant, three elders, and two deacons. The Lutheran church had one predikant, five elders, and one or two deacons.

The colonists were divided into four divisions (burghers), having each a captain, lieutenant, ensign, and sergeant.

A military company also occupied the several posts and strongholds of the colony, and was commanded by the governor, as colonel; a captain-commandant, two lieutenants, one ensign, seven sergeants; besides a surgeon-major, an artillery-master, and three constables.*

Hartsink.

CHAPTER VII.

SETTLEMENTS PROJECTED ON THE RIVER DEMERARA, 1739—SETTLEMENT OF THE ISLAND OF WAAKENAAM; OF THE EAST AND WEST COASTS OF DEMERARA; AND OF THE BANKS OF THE RIVER DEMERARA, 1745—GRANT OF LAND TO A. PIETERS—LAYING OUT OF PLANTATIONS—COMPLAINT OF THE SETTLERS, 1750—REGULATIONS ABOUT SELLING SLAVES, 1768—CANALS PROJECTED, AND THE BANKS LAID OUT IN ESTATES—COURTS OF POLICY AND JUSTICE, 1773—SEAT OF GOVERNMENT AT BORSSELEN REMOVED TO STABROEK, 1774—ORIGIN OF STABROEK—PLAN OF THE TOWN—INTRODUCTION OF SLAVES, FROM 1745 TO 1786—COLONY TAKEN BY BRITISH, 1781—CAPTURED BY THE FRENCH IN 1782—RESTORED TO THE DUTCH AT THE PEACE OF PARIS, 1783—UNION OF THE COURTS OF DEMERARA AND ESSEQUEBO, 1784—MEMORIAL OF COLONISTS TO STATES-GENERAL—PROVISIONAL PLAN OF REDRESS, 1788—DEMERARA AND ESSEQUEBO UNITED—BRITISH EXPEDITION AGAINST THE COLONIES, 1796—TERMS OF SURRENDER—VALUE OF CONQUEST—PRICE OF LAND—SPANIARDS ATTACK OUTPOSTS, BUT ARE REPULSED, 1797—STATE OF THE COLONY WHEN TAKEN POSSESSION OF BY THE BRITISH.

HAVING in the previous chapters traced the progress of the Dutch on the Essequebo and the Berbice, we will now turn to the settlements on the Demerara. It would appear that this river had attracted less attention than either of the others, in consequence, probably, of its inferiority as a navigable stream. The settlers on the two other rivers had gradually extended plantations in the direction of Demerara, and begun to explore the intervening country. The tract of land (afterwards known as the east sea-coast of Demerara) extending to Berbice had been repeatedly visited, and several attempts were made to establish settlements upon it. Some pro-

gress must already have been made in its cultivation, for we learn that in the year 1739 an establishment of the Dutch Company of Berbice was in existence at Naby, in Mahaicony; and about that time a college of keizers, or burgher officers, was appointed for that district.*

The line of coast between Demerara and Essequebo (now called the west sea-coast) had likewise been reached and explored by the settlers on the latter river, who, in some instances, made imperfect attempts to bring it into cultivation. As a general rule, however, the coasts were avoided by the Dutch, who seemed to think that the banks of rivers and the more inland country were better adapted for their purposes; and it was not till about the year 1740, when they made the discovery that the low lands near the sea were more fertile than the heights and inland spots they first occupied, that they began slowly to remove towards the coast. Cotton, more especially, was found to thrive wonderfully well upon the soil in the neighbourhood of the sea, which, at that time, was considered too saline for the sugar-cane, the coffee-bush, and the plantain-tree—all yielding edible products.

About the same period, the island of Wacquename, or Waakenaam, also attracted observation from its fertility; and on the 4th of June, 1741, two gentlemen, Thomas Wilson and James Doing, bought a third part of the island, and established two large estates there. Their example was soon followed by others, who established themselves in the rest of the land.

Subsequently the lands between the Essequebo and Demerara, the present west coast of the county of Demerara, were laid out in sugar and cotton plantations, of which there were at first about fourteen in number cultivated.

* Local Guide, 1832.

The island of Leguan was also partly cleared of its luxuriant vegetation, and several fine estates were mapped out and brought into cultivation; nor were the other islands at the mouth of the Essequebo suffered to run to waste. The hardy Dutch, unmindful of the hardships of living in such secluded and uncivilised spots, boldly set to work to clear a pathway in the interminable bush, and to form plantations on the flat surface of a land exposed to the danger of inundations from the sea, and the enervating influence of the miasm exhaled from its swampy plains.

In the year 1745 the project was seriously entertained of cultivating the banks of the Demerara, and the directors of the Chamber of Zealand granted permission to Andrew Pieters to lay out plantations on the "uninhabited river Demerary" on the following conditions:

1st. The West India Company were not to erect forts or garrisons.

2nd. The inhabitants of Essequebo to be allowed, for ten years, to remove to Demerary, paying the capitation tax, and recognising the jurisdiction of the neighbouring settlement of Essequebo.

3rd. Sugar plantations were to consist of 2000 acres; 1200 roods or rods façade along the river; the remainder in depth, leaving a dam ten rods in breadth between each estate for a road to second depths. Smaller sugar estates were to be 1000 acres in extent; those for cocoa, coffee, or indigo, 500 acres, with façade and depths proportionate. Whilst on this subject, it becomes necessary to describe the old Dutch mode of planning out an estate or plantation.

"Plantations," says Bacon, "are amongst ancient, primitive, and heroical works; for I may justly account new plantations to be the children of former kingdoms." Again he says, and his words are almost prophetic:

"Planting of countries is like planting of woods; for you must make account to lose almost twenty years of profit, and expect your recompense in the end; for the principal thing that hath been the destruction of most plantations, hath been the hasty and base drawing of profit in the first years. It is true, speedy profit is not to be neglected, as far as it may stand with the good of the plantation, but no further." And again, and here, too, his wisdom anticipated the slave trade: "It is a shameful and unblessed thing to take the scum of people, and wicked, condemned men, to be the people with whom you plant; and not only so, but it spoileth the plantation, for they will ever live like rogues, and not fall to work; but be *lazy*, and do *mischief*, and spend victuals, and be quickly weary, and then certify over to their country to the discredit of the plantation."

In these remarkable expressions we have mapped out, as it were, by prophesy the three principal events that mark the course of our history. 1st. The future importance of the colony from a mere assemblage of plantation; 2nd. The ruinous and pernicious system adopted by the successful planters leading to their own overthrow; and 3rd. The introduction of various classes of immigrant labourers, unfit in many essential respects for the work before them. All this will become apparent as we proceed.

After the land was cleared of trees, brushwood, and grass (no trifling labour), they were laid out by surveyors in parallelograms, or narrow rectangular strips, with a frontage or façade to the coast or river. The estate with a river frontage had the best drainage, because the land was generally higher; for it must be remembered that almost all the cultivated lands were below the level of high water at spring tides, except those far inland. On the estates planned out near the coast, the outfall so

necessary to good drainage was very bad, and occasionally rendered impracticable from deposits of mud or fine sand and shells. The size of the estates varied from 500 to 2000 acres, but generally they had a façade of 100 to 300 rods,* and a depth of 750, with the conditional grant of another similar portion if two-thirds of the first allotted land was in cultivation within a given time, and to the satisfaction of two neighbouring planters. In Berbice many of the grants were 18,000 feet wide and 12,000 deep. Each plantation was surrounded by four dams or embankments; two at the sides, extending from front to back; one in front, to exclude the water of the sea or river; and one behind, parallel to the first, to prevent the ingress of what was called "bush water;" that is the accumulated rain that had fallen in the forests and interior, which, having no means of escape, frequently inundated the surrounding country. These "sidelines," as they were afterwards called, were common to two contiguous estates. Between every second estate a broader dam or path was left, which was called the "company's path," a term retained to the present day.

The system of drainage established was the best that circumstances admitted of. Two long canals or trenches were dug of considerable depth, along and inside the "sideline" dams (to construct which the clay assisted materially when thus thrown out), and extended from the front to the back dam; these were termed the main drains, and communicated with smaller trenches or drains which were dug at distances of two to three rods apart, commencing within the portions of land in cultivation called beds, and meeting the side or main drains at right angles; the two side or main drains generally communicated in front by a canal or trench dug out behind the

* The Rhynland rod is equal to 12·32 feet.

front dam, and here one or more sluices or "kokers," as they are termed in Dutch, were placed, which at the ebb tide allowed the drained water to escape. These sluices or "kokers" were very ingeniously constructed. Two pillars of brick were generally sunk at the sides of the trench, and elevated above it in the form of an arch, at the top of which a large wooden wheel was made to revolve by means of spokes, and to draw up or let down by pullies or ropes a heavy wooden door which descended to the bottom of the trench, and excluded at high water the advancing tide, but was readily raised in its sliding at ebb tides to allow the waters to escape.

The plan adopted for bringing home the produce of the field to the buildings or sugar manufactory was equally simple. In the centre of the estate a raised dam, called the "middle walk," was made, along each side of which two deep canals, termed "navigation trenches," were dug. This middle walk and these trenches extended likewise from the front to the back dam, and formed a ready road to the plantation both by land and water. At regular distances the navigation trenches branched off at right angles into smaller canals, running towards the sideline or draining trenches, approached them within a rod or so, thus allowing the canes to be easily conveyed to the sugar works in wooden or iron punts. These navigation canals were chiefly supplied by the rain or fresh water, as it was injurious to the plantation to admit salt water, which, however, sometimes became necessary in seasons of drought. On smaller estates one navigation canal sufficed.

Whilst, therefore, the cultivation of the estates was conducted upon a very simple principle, the buildings erected for the purposes of manufacture were equally plain and primitive.

The sugar-cane, after being cut, was brought to the

manufactory by manual labour (but subsequently by machinery) to be crushed under heavy rollers, and the juice thus expressed was carried away in gutters to be boiled, care being taken first to neutralise its acidity by some alkali such as lime. After being sufficiently boiled and the scum removed, it was thrown into large wooden reservoirs, where it was allowed to cool and granulate into sugar. The principal motive power applied was the wind, hence every sugar estate had one or more windmills built, whose large sails caught the tropical breeze, and served the speculative adventures of the early planters.

It was, however, soon found, that in spite of the constancy of the usual sea breeze, it often happened that the working of the machinery was delayed by the want of sufficient wind to propel the large vanes of the windmill, especially during the wet seasons; hence, in after years, the invention of the steam-engine was hailed with the greatest enthusiasm by the sugar planters. Early in the nineteenth century, or from the year 1805, the introduction of this powerful agent rapidly superseded the more humble windmill. In some situations, where windmills were not admissible, mills were worked either by cattle or, in some suitable localities, by water; but these latter were rare, and the cattle mill was found very tiresome and expensive. The presence of these mills on the estates gave a lively appearance to the several properties, and their maintenance was comparatively inexpensive, advantages which do not belong to the commodious, but more costly steam-engine.

It may perhaps be asked, therefore, whether the total abandonment of these primitive mills has been judicious or profitable; once erected they gave little trouble, and to pull them down was only to discharge an old and

useful servant, because a younger and more active servitor had made his appearance.

Considerable improvement had manifested itself in the progress of civilisation among the new settlers on the river Demerara, and the amount of produce shipped led the inhabitants, both here and in Essequebo, to complain of the exclusive right of the Zealanders (the original settlers) to the navigation of the colonies. These complaints and disputes were carried on for about twenty years, when, as will be seen in its proper place, attention was at length paid to them.

At the earnest demand of the inhabitants, the directors of the Chamber of Zealand transmitted a communication to the Director-General of the two rivers and his council of government, acquainting them with the Chamber's intention to send out a "predikant" or clergyman to the settlers in the river Demerara. This communication was made in 1757, and was signed Thibault and Duvelaw.

Demerara, so long a dependency of Essequebo, was still so in 1751; and the first account I have met with of an independent commander was in 1765, when Jan Cornelis van der Heuvel was appointed by the Chamber of Zealand to act in that capacity; but in urgent cases, appeal was still made to the Director-General of the two rivers. This right of receiving appeals was illustrated in 1768 under the operation of an article of the "free navigation act," which provided that all slaves imported into Essequebo should be sold at public vendue to the highest bidder. An improper advantage, it appears, was taken of this regulation by the slave dealers, who, bidding up the slaves exposed for sale to an enormous price, rendered abortive every advantage of the act. A representation of this proceeding was made by the inha-

bitants to the Director-General Storm Van Gravesande in 1769, and some alterations were subsequently made in 1770, which did away with the unintentional offence committed by the Chamber of Zealand, as well as the dispute about the monopoly of the Zealanders already alluded to.

The right of navigation, hitherto enjoyed exclusively by the Zealanders, had long occasioned the most acrimonious dissensions, and was at last referred to the decision of his Serene Highness, who in 1770 decreed that the right of navigation belonged equally to all the provinces; but that the Zealanders, from length of possession, were entitled to have a preference given to their Society of Directors of "Middleburg;" and the States General, in 1772, promulgated a decree regulating any further differences which might occur. The neighbourhood of two such large rivers as the Essequebo and the Demerara, and the common interests of the settlers rendered it desirable that a channel of intercommunication should be established which would not only open up a more ready intercourse than was afforded by navigating along the coast, which was tiresome, and not a little dangerous from its shoals and sandbanks,* but enable the settlers to put into cultivation a wider extent of inland districts. In the year 1773 a formal plan to that effect was submitted to the West India Company by the Director-General. Whether or not that it was from any such suggestion is difficult to determine, but it is certain that about this period a large canal was commenced to be excavated about six miles from the mouth of the river Demerara, and running from east to west towards the Essequebo, distant at this spot about ten miles. It is

* In the year 1769 there existed about 130 sugar and coffee estates along the river Demerary and its creeks.

more than probable that the commencement of this canal, which received the singular name of No. 1, was commenced at the public expense, but afterwards carried on by new settlers or proprietors, who purchased the new grants of land. The arrangement was as follows:—The course and size of the canal having been carefully estimated, the adjacent land was laid out in allotments of about 100 rods façade, and 500 rods deep, on each side of the proposed canal. It was further agreed to, that all holders of such lots or plantations* were, in the first instance, to dig out half of the canal on their own side, and in front of them along their whole façade, thus dividing the labour of cutting the canal equally between all parties who should settle here. The width of the canal at its junction with the river Demerara was about sixty feet, and its depth about ten, but by degrees it was gradually narrowed, and at the extreme length to which it was ultimately extended, about six miles, it was scarcely half the width of the outlet. This is easily accounted for. When this gigantic undertaking was projected there was a great demand for land, and the capital and labour thus embarked in it enabled the work to be prosecuted with spirit. But by degrees the zeal of the proprietors abated; some evaded their engagements, and others took up land only upon the north side of the canal, confining their operations to their own half, so that the channel fell away to a moiety of its original breadth. It is hardly possible to over-estimate the toil and outlay incurred in cutting through such a length of dense bush and gorgeous foliage, where in every foot of soil was buried the vegetation of ages. But the indomitable energy of the settlers and their slaves vanquished all obstacles, and

* From the names given to the estates along this canal, and also others in the neighbourhood, I am inclined to the belief that the first settlers here were French.

in a comparatively short space of time converted this uncultured waste, this wilderness of unparalleled fertility, into profitable plantations of coffee and plantains. Nor did they rest here. Having secured the useful, they next turned their attention to the embellishments of civilised life. Beautiful gardens were laid out round the gaily painted houses, the rarest flowers were brought from foreign countries, and transplanted into this fertile region, where they flourished in perfection; immense rows of indigenous and other tropical fruit-trees were planted; groves of orange and lime-trees perfumed the air with their fragrance, while dazzling flowers and glossy leaves added their delicate graces to the beauty of a scene which was justly regarded as the loveliest in the whole colony.

A glance at this picturesque spot would have fascinated an artist, who would have discovered ample incidents in it to supply a charming picture—the Hollander gliding along the placid waters of the canal in his comfortable barge, surrounded on each side by the gay dwellings and flowering gardens, the estate in rich cultivation lying beyond, and in the distance the dark outline of sombre forests guarding, as it were, the limits of the enchanted enclosure.

The history of these canals (for others were completed) forms the only trace of romance in the matter-of-fact career of the enterprising Hollander. The construction of these water-tracks (the suggestion of which was, no doubt, derived from his native marshes) showed that he was not insensible to the picturesque capabilities of this wild country, and that he had a genius equal to the task of reducing them to harmonious forms. How bitter would have been his disappointment, how intolerable his grief, could he have foreseen that these monuments of his

industry and skill should have been neglected by a future race and a foreign people.

Since the halcyon days when these works were accomplished the canals have witnessed sad changes and disasters. The estates have been abandoned, the waters are nearly choked up with mud, the accumulation of years; the fruit-trees and the flowers have disappeared; grass and rank verdure have resumed their pristine luxuriance, or are only destroyed by the occurrence of immense fires in the dry seasons, whose devouring flames sweep away all things for miles and miles in their devastating progress. A few impoverished proprietors and a host of squatters alone occupy this region now.

A canal called No. 2 was subsequently dug out, about a thousand rods higher up the river, and the same arrangement obtained in its construction as in the preceding one, so that the rows of plantations, as far as they extended, abutted one on the other at their back dams. Another canal, No. 3, was likewise made on the opposite, or east bank of the river, but did not extend so far inland, or become so important as the rest.

In this manner did the energy and spirit displayed in Demerara contribute to its success, and in a short time (1773) it became necessary to have separate courts of policy and of criminal and civil justice for its distinct administration. These courts consisted of the commandeur of Demerara, or head civil officer; 2nd. The commandant; 3rd. The fiscal; 4th. The vendue master; and four inhabitants of the district, selected from a return of twice that number made by the College of Burgher officers previously alluded to, and who exercised functions similar to the keizers of Essequebo and Berbice. The seat of government was first held at the island "Borselen," about twenty miles up the river, but as the colony

advanced, the inconvenience of such a site was greatly felt in many ways; and in the year 1774 it was removed to the extremity of the eastern bank of the river, where it joined at an angle the east sea coast. A few buildings, chiefly of wood, were erected, and became the embryo of a future city.

The first assemblage of houses received the name of "Stabroek," and consisted of two rows of isolated buildings, wide apart, with a grass-plot between them for a road; they were placed at irregular intervals, and the road or street, about a mile long, run in an easterly direction towards the bush. By degrees, another collection of houses were erected at the extreme angle of the river and coast, and was intended chiefly for the accommodation of military officers, who found it convenient to reside in the neighbourhood of a fort which became erected here, and received the name of "Fort Frederick." The district itself was termed Eveleary* by the Dutch, and Kingstown by the English; which latter name it retains at the present day. Other clusters of houses sprang up as the colony improved, each isolated, in squares or districts, one from the other, and receiving different names, many of which are still retained. The principal of these were named "Cumingsburg," "Bridgetown," "Werken-Rust" (where also a burial-ground was subsequently planned out of about ten acres, and has lasted the inhabitants until within the last few years†), New Town, and Labourgade, the site of the hospital in the time of the Dutch, &c. The same principle was carried out in the construction of all these different dis-

* The name of a former plantation situated here.

† The burial-ground of Werken-Rust, 42 roods front, 60 roods deep, and about 8½ acres, was purchased for the sum of 10,000 guilders in 1797, by the colony. Double that amount had been asked by the owner of the land, but was refused by the Court of Policy.

tricts; that is, rows of houses built on square lots of land, with wide intervening streets and trenches, and ample room allowed for garden or yards to each house, so that when in after years these separate districts had spread, and reached one to the other, they became amalgamated into as well laid out a town as could have been desired had the whole been planned at one time.

Three principal streets extended from north to south; one close along the river, hence termed Water-street; two others more inland, but parallel to it; and between these, other streets branched off at right angles throughout the town, thus dividing the whole into a number of squares, with part of a street at each side. Formerly it was as easy, if not easier, to traverse the town by water as by the roads, which in the wet season were almost impassable, whilst the trenches were then in their prime. A number of public offices were also erected; one a house for the head civil officer, and others for the secretary to the colony, the receiver-general, the commissary, the exploiteur or marshal, &c., besides other necessary buildings, such as a gaol, custom-house, post-office, guard-house, fiscal's office, &c. The original size of the lots of land in town for building on was 100 feet by 200, but they became afterwards subdivided.

But notwithstanding all this progress, the development of the capabilities of the colony was retarded for want of slaves to carry on the rapidly-increasing cultivation. In 1774, the inhabitants of Demerara and Essequebo made formal complaints of the inability or disinclination of the "West India Company" to fulfil their engagements in Surinam and Berbice, where the chief vendues of slaves were held, and objected that during the last twenty years there had been at least thirteen during which no slaves had been sent to these colonies, as the following table shows:

Ships from Africa with cargoes of slaves to Demerara and Essequebo, from 1745 to 1786.

1745 to	1748	0
„	1749	1
1750 to	1761	0
„	1762	1
„	1763	1
„	1764	1
„	1765	0
„	1786	47

Grand total 51 in the 42 years.*

Each vessel averaged about 120 slaves, and it is very clear from the date of the complaint, that an impulse to the "slave trade" had been given by the remonstrances on the part of the colonists; who, however, in the same year, 1774, forwarded a letter of thanks to the States-General for having made a treaty with Spain to prevent the runaway negroes from being received in the Spanish settlements, and also for suppressing the contraband traffic between the rivers Waini and Orinoco.†

In the year 1776, it was proclaimed by an act of the Assembly of Ten, who still continued to represent the affairs of the colony of Demerara, "That the College of Kiezers is not considered a judicial body, but as electors of burgher representatives in council;" and at a subsequent period, viz., about 1778, it was declared, "That the kiezers, not being in the pay of the Company, are not required to watch the interests of the Company, but those of the colony only." About this time also, these settlements, but that of Demerara more particularly, had received a considerable accession of strength by the arrival of a number of English speculators from the islands, who brought with them considerable capital, and introduced a more intelligent and better educated class of

* Bolingbroke.

† In 1775, the Spaniards erected a small fort on the right bank of the Uraricapara, a branch of the river Branco, or Barima. It was intended as a sort of proof of sovereignty over those regions, but was abandoned soon after.

tradesmen along with them. These new planters showed no inclination, as the Dutch had done, to settle far away from the coast, but remained in its neighbourhood; and it was chiefly owing to their exertions and industry that a large track of country was cleared, and the cultivation of cotton and sugar established.

But not only did English arrive, but people from all nations began to be attracted to this spot. Germans, Spaniards, French, Swedes, Danes, and others. The Dutch and British, however, were the most numerous, and the latter soon formed at least two-thirds of the white population, which in the town of Stabroek alone mustered at this period about 1000 inhabitants. Indeed, a great deal of the produce raised was carried away by a species of smuggling in British vessels; for although the Dutch were obliged to oppose the system as contrary to their laws, and had stationed vessels of war at the mouths of the rivers to prevent any such contraband proceedings, yet it was well known that their ardour and vigilance were accessible to bribery. Moreover, as the Dutch vessels were very irregular in carrying away the produce, the impropriety did not appear so great.

However, in the year 1781, the American war having induced Holland to join with France against the British, a large fleet under the famous Lord Rodney was sent to the West Indies, and after having made some seizures in the Caribbean Islands, a squadron was detached to take possession of the colonies of Essequebo and Demerara, which was accomplished without much difficulty. The director-general, or governor, at this time, Van Schuilenburg, having assembled his council, and being aware of the want of Dutch protection, surrendered to the British, who, upon taking possession, found a rich booty; the quantity of produce which had accumulated from the want of shipping proving to be of great value.

The control of these two rivers having, for the first time, fallen into the hands of the British, an officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Kingston, on October 17th, 1781, assumed the government of the colony, which had capitulated on the 3rd of March of the same year.

The sister settlement of Berbice likewise fell into the hands of the captors, who immediately began to grant lands to any adventurers who felt inclined to settle in the new countries. It was in the month of April, 1781, that Berbice capitulated, and it remained under the government of the same English officer as Essequebo and Demerara.

But the duration of the British power, upon this occasion, was brief, and unproductive of any marked results. In the year 1782, a French force approached the shores, and Lieutenant-Colonel Kingston was obliged to capitulate in the month of February, 1782. The Count de Kersaint now became governor of the three rivers and their settlements and inhabitants. To make sure of their conquest, the French began to erect forts at the mouth of the Demerara, one on its eastern, the other on its western bank, and for that purpose compelled the planters to furnish negro labour ; they likewise doubled the capitation-tax, all which innovation was severely felt by the colonists, who saw no end to their troubles. But at the peace of Paris, which occurred in 1783, these settlements were restored to the Dutch, who now meditated great changes. Two new governors were appointed to the colonies in 1784, *J. Bourda*, a member of the Court of Policy, was placed provisionally at the head of affairs for Essequebo and Demerara, and *Peter H. Koppiers* for that of Berbice. This latter officer reclaimed all grants which had been made by the English and French during the late wars, leaving such holders as had built upon, or cultivated their grants, to

address themselves in the ordinary manner to the governor and council. About this period the new colony of Demerara had so far eclipsed the older one of Essequebo, that the two Courts of Policy were united into one, and by a resolution of the States-General in 1784, it was enacted that the Courts of Policy, thus incorporated into one, should in future hold their sessions in "Stabroek." As yet, however, Essequebo retained its own separate courts of justice, which were still held at Fort Island, the ancient capital of that colony.

In the same year, 1784, the West India Company published certain regulations against compelling slaves to work on Sundays, or punishing them with more than twenty-five lashes. But the enforcement of these humane rules was never fully carried out for many years. On the 6th October of the same year, it was enacted by the "Assembly of Ten" for Demerara and Essequebo, that certain Vendue Regulations should be published for future guidance, in which the mode and manner of conducting sales of slaves, cattle, and property, were fully declared in different articles. These regulations did not apply to the vendue-office in Berbice, which was conducted in a somewhat different manner, and so continued for many years after.

In Demerara and Essequebo, it was enacted: 1st. That settlers should give six weeks notice in regard to immovable property, and four weeks' notice in regard to movables, and that the vendue-master, after receiving a statement of the matter to be sold, should publicly advertise it, so that the time of sale might be known in both rivers.

2nd. Persons wishing to sell slaves, horses, other cattle and provisions, to give due notice to the public.

3rd. Two per cent. to be paid by the seller on the amount of all vendues to the vendue-master, and one-

and-a-half per cent. church and poor money, by the purchaser.

4th. Any article bought in, to be charged a quarter per cent. on the sum offered for it, and to be paid to the vendue-master.

5th. Time of sale to be fixed by the director-general and council in the one river, and the commander and council in the other.

6th. Payment of purchase-money, &c., to be made two weeks after the vendue, or within the time limited by the seller, and specified in the conditions of the sale. Payment to be made in specie, or in bills upon Holland, or Zealand, or elsewhere, according to stipulation.

7th. Purchasers to provide sufficient securities, two in number.

8th. The securities to be considered as principals, and to be bound for the whole amount of purchase.

9th. Immovable property to be immediately transported to purchaser on the payment of the amount, &c., &c.

10th. In the event of non-payment, or protest of any bills given, property to revert to seller, who may prosecute the buyer and his securities.

11th. Slaves, horses, and mules, may be removed immediately after the purchase, the two latter to be marked, and further provision taken to guarantee the seller from any loss.

Other rules followed relative to the passing of bills of exchange; to the business and duties of the vendue-master; and to some other minor matters.

These vendue-offices became subsequently of great importance in the two capitals of the district. Georgetown and New Amsterdam were of considerable value to the incumbents, who, appointed by letters patent, enjoyed a monopoly for many years, even after the emancipation. An orphan chamber (weeskamer) was

likewise established for the administration of the effects of persons dying intestate. This body was at first composed of a councillor of justice and certain burgher members, besides an executive officer or "Griffier." The commissaries, as the members of the orphan chamber were called, were changed every two years.

About the year 1785, the colonists of the three rivers, sensible of the imperfect system of taxation, of judicature, and of the public administration generally, endeavoured to procure some amendment in these respects. As early as 1780, the inhabitants of Berbice had complained of the arbitrary monopolies and unjust taxation, and a few years later, the various settlers on the Demerara, applied by petition to the director-general, complaining of an interference in their rights, or rather those of their burgher officers, to appoint the four colonial members of the Court of Policy; for it appeared that during the sway of the French, all the members of the then Courts of Policy and Justice were released from their service as servants of the Assembly of Ten. On the resumption of power, however, by the Dutch, the new Director-General Jan L'Espinasse, by virtue of his instructions from the Assembly of Ten, had appointed some of the colonial members, which act was considered by the inhabitants as contrary to their constitution. The petition of the colonists was referred by the director-general to the West India Company; but in 1785, the inhabitants of Essequebo having joined the others in this matter, a memorial drawn up by both was forwarded to the States-General, who finally confirmed the right of the burgher officers, or keizers, to elect the colonial members of the courts. The colonists of these two rivers also prayed for a reduction of the capitation-tax to two guilders and a half, and that all ex-officio proceedings for taxes might be suspended. These various petitions, with certain others,

had been considered by a committee of the States-General appointed for that purpose in 1788, who in the same year drew up a proposal for a Provisional Plan of Redress, which being approved of by the States-General, was accepted by them. In the following year, 1789, a committee sent out from Holland arrived in the colony of Demerara, dissolved the then existing governments of the two colonies, and established a new one. And it was also in this year that the two colonies became united into one, under the title of the united *colony of Demerara and Essequebo*. In this new constitution regulations for the fiscal or law-officer, the secretaries, the marshals, and other public officers were drawn up; and a new constitution for the several courts instituted, which, although the basis of the subsequent government, was frequently modified in after times.

But, notwithstanding the new regulations, the situation of the colonists of the united colony under the administration of several Dutch governors, viz., A. Backer, in 1789; Baron van Grovestein, in 1793; a Provisional Government in 1795; and, lastly, Anthony Beaujon in the same year, did not afford general satisfaction, and the opinions and sentiments of the British inhabitants had introduced a feeling in favour of the British government. In consequence of growing desire, it appears that, in the year 1796, overtures on the part of some of the inhabitants of the united colony were made to the British commanders in the West Indies; and it has been positively asserted* that a deputation from the colony actually proceeded to Barbadoes for the purpose of making proposals to induce a British expedition to be sent against it; whether this be true or not, it is very certain that on the 15th of April, 1796, war having

* Bolingbroke.

broken out between England and Holland, a secret expedition was sent from Barbadoes (then head-quarters) consisting of a squadron of ships, viz., the *Malabar*, *La Pique*, *Le Babet*, and *Undaunted*, frigates, the *Grenada*, a large transport, and five small schooners and sloops, under Commodore Parr, and a land force of about 1300 troops of the 39th, 93rd, and 99th Regiments, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonels Tilson, Hislop, and Gammell, with a detachment of artillery under Captain Bagot ; the whole force being under the command of Major-General Whyte, who accompanied the expedition. The destination of this large force was not known to the inferior officers ; but on the 20th of April they arrived upon the coast of Demerara. Orders were then issued for three days' provisions to be cooked, and for the troops to hold themselves in readiness for immediate debarkation, and they were forewarned in general orders that all irregular conduct towards the inhabitants, on landing, would subject them to certain disgrace and punishment ; while plunder was prohibited on pain of death. After being paraded upon deck, their arms and accoutrements cleaned and inspected, the field artillery, with carriages, sponges, ammunition, and all the necessary apparatus, were put into boats that evening, preparatory to being conveyed on shore with the troops in the morning. Orders were issued concerning the plan of attack by the troops, and the several stations to be taken by the different ships. All being in readiness for landing on the morning of the 21st of April, the troops were ordered to proceed on shore with the earliest tide, and the frigates, with the *Grenada* transport, were directed to take their station before the fort at the mouth of the river, so as to prevent the escape of any of the enemy's vessels. After a little delay, owing to an accident, which caused the drifting to sea of two boats containing the

necessary implements for working the guns, but which were recovered, the little fleet of sloops, schooners, and other small boats, adapted for the shallow water, got under weigh, and stood direct for the shore; but, unfortunately, they all got aground in the mud that same evening, where they had to wait for the tide, and where they might have been easily annihilated by the Dutch, had any wish for that purpose been entertained. However, the *Grenada* transport, and some of the other vessels, which could find a channel, came to protect them, and were in full view of a Dutch frigate and a quantity of shipping in the river.

On the morning of the 22nd a flag of truce, with a summons to surrender, was sent on shore, but returned about eight A.M. with a letter from Governor Beaujon, who stated that he could not give an official answer until he had first consulted with the Council or Court of Policy, which would meet at once. After that meeting, the following "answer to the summons" was forwarded by the governor and council to the British commanders:

"GENTLEMEN,—We, the governor, members of the council, and commanders of the naval forces of the colony, in council of war assembled, having attentively perused the summons dated yesterday, and addressed to us by your excellencies, demanding the surrender of the said colony to his Britannic Majesty's forces, also the terms thereunto annexed, have, after mature deliberation, resolved to accept said terms, and on them to surrender said colony and dependencies as demanded, whereof we hereby give you notice; also, that our colours will be struck on the landing of your forces. It will depend on the several officers and the troops to decide for them-

selves as to the offers made them, and we have the honour to subscribe ourselves,

"A. BEAUJON, Governor.
"I. VAN WELL, Major.
"A. FITZJCHER, Commander.
"I. P. LUYHEN, } Members
"THOMAS CUMINGS, } of
"A. MEERTENS, } Council.

"By order of council,
"M. S. TINNE, Secretary *ad interim.*

"Dated Fort William Frederic, Demerara, 22nd of April, 1796. Addressed to their Excellencies Major-General Whyte and Commander Parr, &c."

The terms of surrender were: "That the inhabitants were to have full security for their persons; free exercise in matters of religion; enjoyment of all private property (except any subjects of the French Republic); to enjoy, as long as the colony was held by the British, such commercial rights and privileges as other British subjects in the West India colonies; officers and soldiers in the Dutch service to be received into British pay, until restored to the stadtholder, and to serve the king faithfully during the war under oath of allegiance; the soldiers to receive 100 guilders, and the officers 200 days' bat, baggage, and forage money; officers and men of marine force not to be taken on such terms until the king's pleasure be known, but to receive pay according to their rank; the governor and civil officers to retain their several situations if acceptable (except such as are inclined to French interests), but the governor to resign the military command," &c.

The British troops were immediately disembarked, and a portion of them took possession of the colony;

the Dutch garrison marched out of the fort at four P.M., and in the evening of this eventful day the British troops were fairly installed in Fort William Frederic, the strongest, and, indeed, the only defence of Demerara.

Immediately after taking possession of the united colony of Demerara and Essequebo, a division of the force, consisting of part of the 93rd Regiment, was despatched in small schooners and sloops to capture Berbice, distant about twenty leagues. This inconvenient mode of forwarding the troops was adopted in consequence of the impracticability of travelling by land between Demerara and Berbice; for although the coast between them was in part cultivated, yet no regular road had been established. Upon their arrival, the governor, Van Batenburg, and the inhabitants, aware of the fate of the other colonies, at once capitulated upon the same terms, and the former was left in charge of the administration of that colony, whilst Anthony Beaujon continued to hold office in Demerara and Essequebo. Lieutenant-Colonel Hislop, of the 93rd, was, however, left behind by the British forces, on their retirement, as commander-in-chief of the military in the three colonies. The calculated value of this conquest to the British was upwards of 200,000*l.*; about seventy ships were found loaded in the rivers. Considerable public property was sold, but no dividends given as prize-money. Its moral effect was still greater. A number of speculators from the islands had accompanied the expedition, and brought over merchandise and shipping, while others came possessed of capital to purchase property, and in a short time the value of land rose considerably. An acre fetched about 9*l.*, and gradually increased in the next few years to 12*l.*, just double its former value. The uncultivated land between Demerara and Berbice was bought up, and plantations laid out in cotton, as well as along the Mahaica and

Mahaicony creeks. Many of the Dutch proprietors sold their lands to the English, who soon gave a new impetus to industry, and introduced rapidly their manners, customs, and language.

A number of British vessels now resorted to these colonies, and at one time as many as 100 vessels were being loaded together with the produce of the colony. The British likewise voluntarily formed themselves into a "militia corps," and also raised a troop of cavalry. Aware of the importance of the settlement, they spared no pains to bring it to a successful issue. Lieutenant-Colonel Hislop added another regiment to the line, called the 11th West India Regiment, which was raised by a levy on the planters, who contributed a certain number of effective negroes for that purpose in the hope of being repaid by the Government. Their expectations, however, were disappointed; they lost their slaves without ever receiving any remuneration, and the regiment so raised was actually marched away from the colony to the chagrin and mortification of the planters.

It was fortunate for the British that they had adopted these precautionary measures of defence. The Spaniards and other nations still watched these shores jealously, and in 1797 a party of the former attacked the post on the Morocco creek, feeling their way at the extremities of the colony before they would venture to assault the more vital parts. They were, however, gallantly repulsed by Captain Rochelle* and a detachment of Dutch soldiers in the British service, for it appears that the Dutch troops had acceded to the offers of the capitulation, and had entered the service of his Britannic Ma-

* The spirited efforts of this officer were appreciated by the community; soon after this adventure he fell ill, and the colonists, aware of his straitened finances, held a public meeting on the subject, and addressed the Court of Policy, who granted him the sum of 1500 guilders (about 100*l.*), and a similar sum was likewise given to be divided among the officers and privates of the force under him.

jesty; numerous attempts were subsequently made by Spanish privateers to land upon different parts of the colony, especially the remote district of "Pomeroon," where several flourishing plantations formerly existed. To protect the inhabitants from such assaults, troops were stationed here, and "block-houses," as they were termed, were erected, in which the soldiers lodged as in a fort. The object of such piratical attacks was rather to plunder and carry away the slaves for sale than any definite design of conquest. To endeavour to put a stop to this, the inhabitants prayed the Court of Policy to provide armed boats and cannon to protect certain parts of the coast. According to the articles of capitulation in 1796, it was agreed that the Government of Demerara and Essequebo should continue as before under Governor Beaujon and the other members of the Courts of Policy and of Justice; and in Berbice under its respective governor and courts; but, at the same time, it was understood that in both these colonies the military command should devolve on the British officer highest in rank in the two places. Lieutenant-Colonel Hislop accordingly exercised that office in Stabroek, the capital of Demerara and Essequebo, whilst another British officer commanded in Berbice.

It was an old custom of the colony that the commanding officers of the troops should receive certain grants from the colony, known as table-money, flag-money, and prison-money. This latter perquisite arose from a charge made on the admission or discharge of persons out of confinement, one-half of which went to the fiscal, the other half to the military officer. The perquisite arising from the flag-money was discontinued during the administration of a late governor, W. A. Baron Van Grovestein, who appropriated that money, as well as that arising from the tonnage and export duty, to the

service of the colony. The table-money was, however, demanded by Colonel Hislop, and granted by the governor and Court of Policy. It amounted to 600 guilders per annum, or about 40*l.*; but in the following year, at a meeting of the Court of Policy, presided over by Governor Beaujon, it was raised to 8000 guilders per annum, payable quarterly. At a subsequent meeting, composed of four councillors and four representatives, during the premeditated absence of the governor, the sum of 12,000 guilders was awarded as table-money, to be divided between the governor and the military officer highest in command; whilst a smaller sum of 750 guilders was given to the commander of Essequebo.*

When the British took possession of the colony in 1796, they found a number of negroes in chains, who had been sentenced to work in gangs for various acts of ill-conduct. The new authorities ordered the fetters to be struck off, and many of these liberated negroes availed themselves of their liberty to run away from their owners. There used to be a fine of 1000 guilders on masters of vessels who carried away slaves, whether as sailors or otherwise. One-third of this fine went to the fiscaal, another third to the colony, and the remainder to the informer. A similar fine was imposed for leaving improper or useless individuals behind,

One of the first acts under the British rule of the governor and Court of Policy of Demerara and Essequebo was the institution of the College of Financial Representatives, in accordance with a project previously planned and devised.†

* See minutes of Court of Policy, 1798.
† See Appendix respecting the Institution of the Financial Representatives.

CHAPTER VIII.

OPENING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY—GENERAL STATE OF THE COLONY UNDER THE DUTCH, 1796—COLONIES CEDED TO THE BATAVIAN REPUBLIC AT THE TREATY OF AMIENS, 1802—INJURIOUS CONSEQUENCES—IMPAIRED CONDITION OF THE COLONY UNDER THE BATAVIAN REPUBLIC—MORTALITY OF TROOPS—MUTINY OF DITTO IN BERBICE—AMICABLE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE DUTCH AND THE INDIANS—RULES RESPECTING POSTHOLDERS—BRITISH FORCE IN THE WEST INDIES, 1803—SURRENDER OF DEMERARA AND ESSEQUEBO—CAPITULATION OF BERBICE—POLITICAL ANALYSIS—COURT OF POLICY—COLLEGE OF KEIZERS—FINANCIAL REPRESENTATIVES—COMBINED COURT—COURTS OF CIVIL AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE—DUTCH CODE OF LAW—DUTIES OF FISCAAL—BURGHER DISTRICTS AND OFFICERS—STATE OF THE COLONY, 1805.

THE opening of the nineteenth century, marked at first by the scourge of war in Europe, resulted in the establishment and consolidation of a general peace. This colony participated in the advantages of restored security, infinitely more important to her than to the old communities, upon whose tranquillity her prosperity mainly depended. The great moral changes, which were finally destined to bring her industry to bear effectually upon her resources, were reserved for this period; and consequences more beneficial than any she had ever derived from the dominion of the sword ensued upon the long term of repose which now favoured her efforts.

Having followed her history for nearly three hundred

years, and traced step by step the varying influences for good and evil exercised over her development by the several races of inhabitants that sought her shores, from the buccaneering Spaniard, the piratical Portuguese, to the plodding Dutch settler and speculative English adventurer, we now come to that era in her social history when British authority ruled over the land; when the policy, wisdom, and philanthropy of England were to open a new field of exertion in this remote spot of her vast dominions; and English emigrants were to press forward from their frigid climate to seek their fortunes under a tropical sun.

> Omnibus hunc potius, communem animantibus orbem,
> Communes et crede Deos; patriam inde Vocato.
> Qua redit itque dies; nec nos diis nata malignis
> Cluserit hoc crudo semper sub frigore messis;
> Fas mihi non stabilis, fas et tibi linquere colchos.

The success of the Hollander in his agricultural explorations of the land, and the sagacious but interested line of conduct he pursued towards the negro, have been already noticed. During the period of about two hundred years that the Dutch possessed this land, the march of improvement had indeed reached the soil, but brought no benefit to the slave who tilled it. The labourer had not risen above his original condition, save in a few instances. Physical circumstances had advanced, but mind had made no progress. The old customs, habits, and laws of the Dutch hung, like the miasm, undissipated over the vast shores of Guiana. The people had languished without a teacher; the soul had not been elevated to God; the promise of salvation had scarcely in one instance been offered to the dark child of Africa. While this glaring and lamentable neglect was painfully visible on the one hand, it was no less obvious on the other that the enterprising Hollander had bestowed anxious attention upon his own worldly interests. The

three largest rivers were studded with plantations, and the coasts were relieved of their former dreariness and useless verdure. The coffee, cotton, and sugar estates were in a high state of cultivation. The buildings and houses were in excellent repair, and crusted over with layers of gaudy paint; for with the thrifty Dutch it was a maxim that a house could not be too often painted both for economy and comfort, a prudential maxim of especial efficacy in a climate where wooden structures would speedily perish without such a protection. The elegance and luxuries of life abounded; plants of every variety and fruit-trees in great numbers, introduced from other countries, enlivened the somewhat monotonous scenery of the cultivated districts, besides contributing to the pleasures of the table. The inhabited parts of the colony resembled more a garden than a land explored by the European and peopled by the African. To the eye of a stranger there was little in the waving fields of canes, and their yellow stems and long green leaves, that indicated the wealth which the art of man had the power of extracting from them. There was little in the plain shrub and yellow flower of the cotton which could point out the important uses to which they were converted by mechanical appliances; and the prim and erect coffee bush might have been overlooked and classed as a mere wild growth of the forest, save for the regularity of its outline, and the exact arrangement of the trees.

The capital of the colony, called Stabroek, consised of only two long rows of houses, stretching from the eastern bank of the river Demerara for about a mile toward the forest, or "Bush," and a few buildings erected at the mouth of the river, occupied by the military. The town, if such it might be called, was intersected by numerous canals, which were necessary for the drainage of the adjacent estates; and communication from one part to the

other was as easily effected by water as by land, especially in the wet seasons, for as yet few regular streets were to be met with. The number of estates at this time throughout the three provinces of Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice was about 150, of which the greater part were planted with cotton, which promised to be the most lucrative branch of trade. Indeed, out of about 100 estates, situated principally on the east coast, or maritime portion of land, stretching between the rivers Demerara and Berbice, only one was planted with the sugar cane. The average produce of eighty good cotton estates was from 50,000 to 60,000 lb. each per annum; the average number of cotton bushes on each estate was about 600; each bush calculated to yield about 8 oz., or ½ lb. of cotton, which at that time was sold for about 15 stivers, or little more than a shilling. For the cultivation of such land one able negro was sufficient for two acres. Each acre laid out in coffee cultivation had about 450 trees, each tree yielding about 1½ lb. of berry, realising from seven to eight stivers per pound; and for the working of such estates two able negroes were considered necessary for every three acres. An acre of sugar plantation yielded about 2000 lbs., at 4d. per lb., besides molasses and rum. To raise such a crop one negro was reckoned for every acre. The number of slaves employed through the colony were from 50,000 to 60,000. One proprietor alone had about 2000 under his charge. The price of a slave at this time was from 600 to 900 guilders, or 40*l.* to 60*l.*, and the profit obtained from his labour amounted to 20*l.* or 25*l.* per annum. The hire of a negro was from one to two guilders per day (two or three shillings); if for the year, 200 to 300 guilders, or about 20*l.* Provisions were sold at the following rates:— Bread, 1 bit, or 4d. per lb.; pork, 2½ bits per lb.; beef and mutton, 3 to 4 bits; milk, 1 bit per pint; cheese,

4 bits per lb. ; salt butter, 4 bits per lb. ; turkeys, 4 to 6 dollars each ; ducks, 1 dollar ; a fowl, 1 dollar ; hams, 4 bits per lb. ; loaf sugar, 6 bits per lb. ; tea, 4½ dollars per lb. ; apples, 4 bits per dozen ; onions, 1 bit per dozen ; Madeira wine, 1 dollar per bottle ; claret, 1 dollar per bottle ; porter and beer, each 6 bits per bottle ; plantains, 1 to 2 bits per bunch ; yams, 1 bit per gallon ; eddoes, 2 bits per gallon ; sweet potatoes, 1 bit per gallon ; oranges, 1 bit per dozen ; pines, 3 bits a dozen ; Indian corn, 3 to 4 bits per 100 ears ; grass, 1 bit per bundle, &c.*

Society at this period was resolvable into three great classes.

The whites, so designated *par excellence*, were composed of officials, professional men, military, merchants planters, and a few tradesmen.

Second, the freedman or liberated slave, and mechanics of various classes. The free coloured population, avowing a decided contempt for the slaves, were certainly not warranted in so doing by any marked superiority over them. They had, it is true, some smattering of education, but this in reality was of no use to them ; they copied too closely the habits indulged in by the whites, and, without their industry and perseverance, aimed at rivalling them in their fashions. Turning away from the advantages which might have resulted from a life of agricultural pursuits, and seeking rather the means of livelihood in the towns, they let several opportunities pass by of advancing as a class. In after times they, consequently, became much reduced in means and position, and eventually were the worst off in a community where, at one time, they held a middle rank. The free popula-

* It was formerly the practice of the Court of Policy to fix the price of food and other articles. See Minutes, 1797.

tion at this period (including the whites) amounted to about 8000 or 10,000.

Third, the field labourer or slave. The last continued to lead much the same kind of life as we have already described, making but little progress either in civilisation or education; but yet watching closely the example set them by their masters, and insensibly acquiring some ideas of advancement. They were gradually stimulated by the same desires for pleasure, dress, and display which they had observed to influence the European. The notions then fostered were afterwards to be rapidly developed.

The white population, more particularly those holding the higher situations in life, revelled in ease, enjoyment, and sensual gratification. The virtues of hospitality and generosity were practised to a higher degree, perhaps, than in any other country. When a stranger presented himself the house of entertainment was immediately open to him. Every comfort and luxury that wealth could procure was lavished upon him; his wishes were anticipated; his desires excited but to be directly gratified, and the very passions of the guest were as much pandered to as his tastes or his feelings. Then came the round of busy professionals, jovial and roystering officers, seekers of pleasure and dissipation; whilst the austere but watchful official looked on with a keen glance at the delinquencies and the advantages of a society so strangely constituted—so good (according to an ungracious proverb of the Italian), that it was good for nothing:

Tanto buon che val niente.

It cannot be a matter of much astonishment that the absence of refinement in the higher classes should, at last, begin to affect the mass of the population; nor, when we consider the imitative power of man, always

eager to copy rather what is bad than what is good, can we cast much blame upon the slave for reflecting back an exaggerated image of the vices he daily observed in the conduct of his master?

> Omni animi vitium tanto conspectius in se
> Crimen habet, quanto major qui peccat habetur.
>
> More public scandal vice attends,
> As he is great and noble who offends.

But whilst the energy and industry of the British was about to meet its merited reward, whilst the cultivation of the three colonies and the number of slaves had wonderfully increased, and every precaution had been taken to render the conquest permanent, an event occurred in Europe which frustrated all the good that had been effected by the colonists, and involved them for many years in confusion and misery.

In the year 1802, the peace of Amiens terminated, or rather suspended, the war between England and Holland, and it was stipulated in that agreement, that the colonies of Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice, should be ceded to the "Batavian Republic," as the Dutch provinces unadvisedly styled themselves, in order to please the revolutionary French, who "had regenerated them." Never was a more suicidal act committed by the British; never was a more wanton injury inflicted upon private and public interests. The British exercised at this period the greatest influence in these settlements, to which they had been invited by the inhabitants, and whither they had been conveyed by his Majesty's forces. By their numbers, their intelligence, and their wealth, they constituted the majority of the respectable inhabitants; and the Dutch, already conscious of their declining power, were willingly and gradually relinquishing their pretensions. So that in fact, while every local circumstance was tending to transform slowly these possessions into British

colonies, the Government, unaware of, or inattentive to their importance, took the very steps which were to prove most fatal to their overthrow.

Let us pause here, and examine into some of the consequences of this measure. The value of land, which had been slowly increasing, as before observed, now rapidly fell, and such was the consternation of the inhabitants, that according to an old historical authority, one estate actually sold for a negro; another, in jest or derision, for a "turkey,"* which, it is said, gave rise to its name in after times. The bills which had been drawn on British houses, came back protested to the amount of 625,000*l.*, including the 25 per cent. damages, which by a law of the colony was allowed on all returned bills of exchange. An arrangement was then made with some Dutch mercantile houses to take up these bills and others which were drawn; but the war with the Batavian Republic soon breaking out again, these bills also came back; which circumstances, together with the loss of produce, and ships captured by the enemy, want of supplies, &c., led to the greatest distress. The courts of justice were closed; business was suspended; cultivation was impeded, if not paralysed; and a panic, such as had never before been experienced, seized upon the whole country.

The total loss sustained by the colonists under the peace of Amiens was thus calculated by the inhabitants:

Damages on bills returned	£250,000
Expenses of law-suits, interests, postage, &c. . .	10,000
Captures of produce and ships	1,000,000
	1,260,000
Less this sum recovered by order of King and Council .	125,000
	£1,135,000.

* See Bolingbroke; the limited period allowed for the disposal of the properties of the settlers was the cause of these singular occurrences.

This trifling sum mentioned as recovered resulted from the remonstrance and application of the colonists to the British Government, setting forth the hardship of having British colonial merchandise and produce seized and sold, irrespective of all justice to the owners. Probably a larger sum might have been recovered, had not the uncertainty and heavy law expenses deterred many of the colonists from advancing their claims.

Under the "Batavian Republic," these colonies were the scene of civil and political confusion. The spirit of democracy which had broken out in the neighbouring colonies of Surinam and Cayenne, fostered by the vehement declamation of the French patriots, threatened also to convulse these shores; and hostile feelings arose between the monarchial British and the republican foreigners. The former were called tyrants, aristocrats, and other such names, by the "sans culotte" class, who were absurd enough to talk about liberty in a land of slaves, whose manacles were forged by themselves. The cap of Liberty and Equality appeared very charming on their own heads, but was never intended to fit the cranium of the astonished African, who looked on in silence and wonder at the vagaries of the "Buckras."

The Governor of Demerara and Essequebo at this time was Anthony Meertens, who had been appointed in 1802 by the Batavian Republic; and in Berbice the colony was ruled by a Provisional Government, composed of two members of the council, the former governor, Van Batenburg, having been recalled to give an account to the home government of the surrender of that colony to the British in 1796. Governor Meertens made himself extremely unpopular to the British party by his insulting and overbearing conduct towards them. His expressed wish was to drive away every Englishman from the

country, and he certainly would have succeeded in his object had time been allowed him.

It was intimated to the British that a certain period would be granted to them for arranging their affairs before they left the colony, to whose prosperity they had contributed so much; but the governor exercised his authority so rigorously in the interval, by hastening their departure, and loading them with threats, that many absolutely gave up their properties at a tremendous sacrifice. Nor was it by the English alone that his acts were felt to be arbitrary and unjust; some of his own countrymen also suffered from his severity. He compelled the burgher militia, or white inhabitants, to execute the military duty of the town, which was very irksome to persons unaccustomed to such a life; and, in the end, this enforced task proved fatal to many of the young men. Perhaps an irregular and dissipated mode of living may have helped towards this result; but it was very well known that a great number died at this particular time, in consequence of the hardships to which they were subjected. It is possible that the mortality among the soldiers of the "Batavian Republic" may have compelled the governor to adopt this step; a necessity, however, which does not excuse or account for the harshness he had previously shown to these very soldiers. A very fine body of troops from Holland had lately arrived in the colony, to the number of about 2000. No preparations had been made for their reception or accommodation; and exposed to the sun and rain, without wholesome or sufficient food, tempted with new rum, and huddled together in crowds, disease broke out among them, and a frightful mortality resulted. In vain did the commanding officers seek for assistance and money; in vain did the medical staff attempt to stay the danger—the greater part of the medical officers being

young and inexperienced men, who had gone through no regular course of study, and who had got admission into the army during the turbulence and confusion of war; in vain did the soldiers themselves clamour and remonstrate. They died in scores; their corpses could not be buried fast enough, and at last were taken out to sea in punts, and committed to the waves. The "noyades" of the dead, if not of the living, followed the republic even to these realms. Within three months, 500 of these fine troops lay buried in the mud flats, and the commanding officer, in despair, resigned, and disappeared.

The administration of the civil service was not more cheering. Partiality, bribery, and abuse had crept into the several offices. Many different situations were held by one individual, who was frequently an absentee. The following was an estimate of the salaries received, by fees, perquisites, and other means, by some of the principal officers of the colony about this period:—

The governor	£6,000 to £8,000
Receiver of colonial taxes	800 „ 2,000
Government secretary	1,000 „ 3,000
Receiver of king's dues	500 „ 1,500
Vendue-master	1,000 „ 3,000
Fiscal	3,000 „ 4,000
Exploiteur or marshal	1,000 „ 3,000
Post-master and naval officer	800 „ 2,000
Harbour-master	500 „ 1,000
Collector and comptroller	1,000 „ 3,000

The variable amounts mentioned possibly arose from the uncertainty and irregularity attending the system of fees, &c.; for, although tariffs of these at different times had been instituted, they were rarely attended to.

The following anecdote, from a writer* who lived in this colony from 1795 to 1805, illustrates this circum-

* Bolingbroke.

stance, as well as the general depravity which must have pervaded society.

A gentleman from the islands, who was not upon very good terms with the *fiscal* of Demerara, Mynheer Van ——, applied to him one day, when he happened to meet him on horseback, to know what sum would be required by that officer to absolve him from all consequences in his determination to chastise another, to whom he owed a grudge; the fiscal, after a moment's reflection, demanded 150 guilders, which were immediately paid to him by the gentleman, who collared the astonished Dutchman, dragged him from his horse, and severely horsewhipped him, telling him at the same time ghat *he* was the party to whom he owed the grudge, and wishing him good morning, as he now felt satisfied. The defeated Dutchman pocketed the money and the insult, leaving the affair to die of itself. But the joke was too ood to be kept secret, and has been regularly chronicled.

It appeared that in the neighbouring colony of Berbice the troops had been equally badly treated, for early in 1803 a mutiny took place. The insurgents, to the number of some hundreds, were headed by several of the officers, a captain especially, and they compelled the commandant and his adherents to evacuate Fort St. Andrew, and take refuge in the Government-house. After a short time, they were obliged to abandon this temporary shelter, and to retreat upon "York Redoubt," a military post opposite the river. From this place they sent off for reinforcements; but, as we have seen, there was already great discontent existing in the troops in Demerara, and only 100 men could be depended on for such a service. The mutineers in Berbice offered the government of the colony to an English planter, who prudently declined it. At length some more troops arrived from Surinam, and an attack was planned by

Colonel Matthias and Major Van Hamer. They contrived to land above New Amsterdam, the capital of Berbice, and here they attacked the insurgents, who, driven from Government-house, fled across the river Canje, pursued by the troops, who met with some casualties. On the 9th of May, more troops arrived from Surinam, and proceeded to attack Fort St. Andrew, which was still occupied by some of the insurgents, assisted by the vessel of war, *Serpent*, and 40 canoes, with about 400 native Indians, who had volunteered to join them. They succeeded in compelling the soldiers to surrender on the 10th of May. About 200 men were taken prisoners, five of whom were shot. The officer who commanded them was sent to Holland, tried, and executed.

The Bucks, or native Indians, had more than once proved of great service to the Dutch inhabitants. They sided with them against the insurgent negroes, and now again assisted them against their own mutinous soldiers. These services sufficiently explain the friendly feelings displayed towards them by the Dutch, who passed several laws to protect and favour them.

It had long been a practice with the Dutch to place persons on the principal rivers in the colony to act as superintendents or magistrates in the neighbourhood. These persons were called "Post-holders," and, residing beyond the ordinary districts in cultivation, were brought into frequent communication with the native Indians, who soon formed an attachment to them. Instructions for the Post-holders, in accordance with the friendly sentiments of the Dutch towards the Indians in Demerara and Essequebo, were printed in 1803;* and, as might have been expected, created very jealous feelings

* See Appendix.

in the minds of the negroes, who, while the hand of amity and protection was extended to the Bucks, still continued to be treated in the old way.

By the former laws of the Dutch, persons were prohibited from purchasing or holding as slaves any of the Indian tribes, or even the offspring of Indian females; and in the event of any of the Indians having been bought as slaves, they were required to be given up at the secretary's office, and negro slaves were to be given instead, on the payment of five guilders to the governor. Laws were also made that in the event of the free Indians having slave Indians as wives, they should be compelled to support them, and to provide for their children, and planters and others were obliged to arrest such Indians if they attempted to desert their wives.

Other laws were likewise made to prevent the Indians being molested, either by word or deed, under a penalty of twenty-five guilders; many of these laws began to be enforced as early as the year 1736, and were afterwards renewed.

The administration of these colonies during the dominion of the Batavian Republic was not calculated to promote the interests of the colonists or the value of their possessions. It was unfortunately a period of excitement and agitation, and the anxieties and uncertainty incident on the prosecution of war between England and France naturally gave rise to hopes and fears on the part of those who were inclined to side with the one power or the other. Business was transacted, and the cultivation of property carried on apparently as usual, but they were impeded by circumstances at once inconvenient and disadvantageous, arising from the perpetual alarms produced in a colony by the fluctuating intelligence from Europe. The few British colonists who, under obloquy and ill-treatment, still remained to pro-

secute their enterprising schemes with persevering energy, were not without hope that the supremacy would be gallantly maintained by England, the acknowledged mistress of the ocean, and as the sounds of war drew nearer to these shores their hopes, as well as those of the sensible Dutchmen, were roused to the highest pitch. It was well known that a powerful British armament was directing its course to the West Indies. A squadron under Commodore Hood, and a fine body of troops under General Grinfield, at length attacked the hostile possessions of the West Indies. On the 22nd June, St. Lucia was carried by storm; on the 30th Tobago was attacked and capitulated; while on the 19th September the colonies of Demerara and Essequebo were reduced by the same commanders. The settlement of Berbice capitulated on the 24th.

The following were the terms of the capitulation:

"*Proposed Articles of Capitulation, by which Demerara and Essequebo were to be surrendered to Great Britain, in* 1803.

"Article 1st. The laws and usages of the colony shall remain in force and be respected; the modes of taxation now in use are to be adhered to, and the inhabitants shall enjoy the public exercise of their religion in the same manner as before the capitulation; no new establishments shall be introduced without the consent of the Court of Policy, or the Legislature of the Colony. The constituted authorities and public officers, whether in the civil, law, or Church establishments, as well as the members of the respective courts (except the Governor-General), shall be continued in their respective offices and situations until his Majesty's pleasure be known.

"Answer.—Granted.

"2nd. The inhabitants, those at present in the co-

lony, as well as those who may be abroad, shall be protected in their persons, and have the free enjoyment of their properties, without being troubled or molested for any acts whatsoever, other than such as they might commit subsequent to the capitulation, and in violation of the oath of fidelity they shall be required to take.

"Answer.—Granted.

"3rd. The inhabitants shall, on no account whatever, be obliged to take up arms against an external enemy; but their services shall only be required for quelling internal commotions or disturbance, according to the existing regulations of the burghers, and for maintaining the internal tranquillity of the colony, in conformity to what has always taken place to this day.

"Answer.—Granted, until, at the conclusion of the war, it shall be determined to what Government these colonies shall be subjected

"4th. That debts contracted by the Government for the building of new barracks, the erection of batteries, the purchase of provisions for the garrison, the salaries of civil officers due, shall, on the first demand, be paid out of the Sovereign's or Government chest, as well as other demands that would have been paid or reimbursed by Government had the colony not been taken.

"Answer.—Granted.

"5th. The sea and land forces of the Batavian Republic, stationed in the colony, shall be allowed to depart freely. They shall retain their arms, and the whole of their baggage, as well the officers, non-commissioned officers, as privates. They shall be supplied by the commandant of his Majesty's forces with proper vessels to convey them, with the utmost convenient speed, to one of the ports of the Batavian Republic, and during the passage thither they shall receive, on account of his Majesty, each according to his rank, the same rations,

both as to quality and quantity, as are usually allowed to British troops.

"Answer.—Granted; but the troops and seamen must be considered as prisoners of war, and not to bear arms against Great Britain or her allies until regularly exchanged or released, and the arms and accoutrements of the soldiers must be delivered up.

"6th. The corvette *Hippomenes* shall be given up unarmed, for transporting her officers and crew to one of the ports of the Batavian Republic. As many other troops of the Batavian garrison shall embark and take their passage in the said corvette as can be conveniently placed on board of her.

"Answer.—Cannot be granted; proper vessels will be furnished, at the expense of the British Government, to carry the troops and seamen to Europe.

"7th. The Governor-General, not having military rank, shall be at liberty to remain in the colony until he shall have collected the necessary documents or proofs towards enabling him to lay before his Sovereign an account of his administration; after which every facility shall be afforded him to return to the Batavian Republic in a manner suitable to his rank. He shall be allowed to require such copies of papers from the Government and Colonial Secretary's Office as he may deem necessary for the purpose above expressed.

"Answer.—Granted.

"8th. From the day of the colony being taken possession of by the British forces the Batavian troops shall be supplied with their usual rations by the British commanders until the day of their embarkation, and from that moment the Batavian troops are to receive the same rations as are usually allowed to British troops when at sea, in the manner mentioned in the 5th Article.

"Answer.—Granted.

"9th. The Batavian troops shall continue to all intents and purposes under the command of their own officers. Every respect and honour shall be mutually shown by the troops of both nations to one another, and care shall be taken on both sides to preserve peace and tranquillity until the departure of the Batavian troops.

"Answer.—Proper quarters will be allowed for the Batavian troops, and to which they must confine themselves until their embarkation.

"10th. The Batavian garrison shall be allowed freely, and without any hindrance, to take along with it all accoutrements and arms belonging to it; also the effects of deceased officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates that may yet be unsold, whether the same be deposited in the public magazine or in any other place.

"Answer.—That part of the article relating to the arms and accoutrements has been answered in Article 5; the remainder is granted.

"11th. The sick of the Batavian troops who may be left behind in the hospital shall be treated and taken care of in the same manner as the British soldiers; they shall be entitled to the same terms of the capitulation, and enjoy the same advantages, as are stipulated for the rest of the Batavian garrison; and, in like manner as the latter, they shall, after their complete recovery, be transported, with the most convenient speed, to one of the ports of the Batavian Republic.

"Answer.—Granted.

"12th. The commander of his Majesty's forces shall immediately on the colony being taken possession of, furnish the Governor-General with a conveyance to transmit to the Batavian Government a copy of the capitulation, with a statement of the reasons which induced him, as well as the Council of Policy and the

commanding officers of the Batavian forces, to surrender the colony to his Britannic Majesty.

"Answer.—Granted; the vessel which takes our despatches to Europe will take those of the governor of the colonies.

"13th. No negroes shall be required from the planters for the purpose of forming or recruiting any black corps.

"Answer.—Granted.

"14th. Should any difficulties arise in consequence of any dubious expressions occurring in the present capitulation, the same shall be explained or construed in the sense most favourable to the colony or the Batavian garrison.

"Answer.—Granted.

"Government-house, September 18, 1803.

(Signed) "A. MEERTENS, Governor-General of Essequebo and Demerara.

"P. ROSMWINKEL, Major.

"G. H. TROTZ, Commander of Essequebo.

"D. J. C. LAMBERT, Captain of Artillery.

"P. P. LEYHEN.

"J. HOFFMAN, First Lieutenant.

"CHRIS. D. MACK.

"F. VAN DER VELDEN.

"F. KNOLL.

"By command of the Court of Policy,

"P. F. TINNE, Secretary.

(Signed) "WILLIAM GRINFIELD, Lieutenant-General.

"SAMUEL HOOD, Commodore,

"By order,

"WILLIAM TATUM, Military Secretary.

"H. TRACY, Naval Secretary."

Additional Articles.

"1st. Possession of Fort William Frederic is to be

given to a detachment of British troops this evening, by 7 o'clock P.M. ; also the possession of the Batavian ship-of-war, the *Hippomenes*, to the British seamen ; and the *Hornet*, British sloop-of-war, and the schooner *Netley*, are to be allowed to pass into the harbour of Demerarā.

" Answer.—Acceded to.

" 2nd. Possession of the colonies of Demerara and Essequebo are to be given to the British by 12 o'clock to-morrow, noon.

" Answer.—Acceded to.

(Signed) " WILLIAM GRINFIELD, Lieutenant-General.
" SAMUEL HOOD, Commodore.
" G. H. TROTZ.
" F. KNOLL.
" J. HOFFMAN.
" A. PARRY HERKLOTS, Lieutenant, Navy.

" Heureux, September 19, 1853."

The colony of British Guiana, at the time when it thus finally passed into the hands of the English, consisted of two separate Governments, Demerara and Essequebo being united, and ruled over by an officer appointed by the Batavian Republic, with the title of Governor, and the settlement of Berbice, which had likewise its own governor. These governors were perfectly independent of each other; but the habits, laws, and pursuits of the three colonies were nearly, if not entirely, identical.

The form of government in Demerara and Essequebo in 1803 consisted of a Court of Policy, or Council of Policy, comprising eight members—four official, and four from amongst the inhabitants, two each from Essequebo and Demerara, elected by another body called the College of Keizers, a Dutch word, signifying electors or choosers. The Court of Policy was first composed of

the governor, the commandants of Demerara and Essequebo, and certain directors of the West Indian Company's plantation, besides a secretary. They met four times a year (the first Sunday in January, and so on for the other months) to consider the report of the company's proceedings and the granting of fresh lands. The four official members were the governor, the Commander of Essequebo, the Fiscal of Demerara, and the Fiscal of Essequebo. To be qualified for a member of council, it was necessary to be a freeholder, to be Protestant, to understand the Dutch language, and to have been three years in the colony. The non-officials were returned by the College of Keizers in each district, viz., two for each river.

The College of Keizers for each district was elected by the inhabitants, and the members, five first and afterwards seven in number, retained office for life, or during their residence in the colony. The qualification for office was the possession of 25 slaves, and a residence in the colony of three years; the qualification for votes was the possession of 25 slaves, but the right of voting was afterwards allowed to persons paying 70 guilders a year in taxes. The votes taken by ballot were sent into the Government secretary's office, deposited in a sealed box, and opened in the presence of the governor, and not less than two other members of the Court of Policy. The first assembly of electors was chosen by the counsellors of justice from among the burghers. The College of Keizers nominated two persons to fill vacancies in the Court of Policy. The governor and the court selected one from the nomination, and notified in an official paper, the *Gazette*, the person so selected. The senior member of the court went out after two years. An annual meeting was held with another body, and this assembly was called the Combined Court, which assembled every

year for the purpose of levying taxes, granting moneys, &c. In cases of vacancy in the other courts, the assembly of electors sent a double nomination to the Supreme Court of Justice who selected one.*

Financial Representatives.—The members constituting this college were six in number: three nominated by the inhabitants of Demerara, in the same manner and with the same qualification as the Keizers, and three by the inhabitants of Essequebo. Their term of service was limited to two years, and their duties, as we have seen, consisted of meeting the Court of Policy once in a year, at a session called the "Combined Court," for the purpose of levying taxes and regulating the expenditure. At this combined meeting, the Court of Policy submitted an estimate of the expenses of the year to come, which had previously been prepared and discussed in that court. In the Combined Court, every item of the estimate was discussed, and every member, whether of the Court of Policy or Financial Representative, had an equal vote. (But this was not the case in the original constitution of the colony. This court had no power to control the amount of colonial expenditure; its functions were confined to determine what taxes should be raised to meet the expenditure.) At this meeting the public accounts of the preceding year were examined and audited, which was the peculiar province of the Financial Representatives.

The Court of Policy passed all laws for the internal regulation of the colony. It required four members to constitute a court. No law was binding without the

* During the time of the Dutch, the powers entrusted to the colonists in their different institutions were very restricted, but were gradually enlarged, especially under a British flag. The Dutch Government was nearly absolute, and with good reasons, owing to a different state of society. Modification, however, gradually crept into the constitution of the colony, and often without a proper or legal sanction.

vote of one member of the non-official section of the court. The qualification for a member of the Court of Policy was the proprietorship of a plantation, and a residence of three years in the colony.

Judicial Department.—The districts of Demerara and Essequebo had each a Court of Civil and Criminal Justice, which consisted of six members and a president. The Courts of Criminal and Civil Justice were first composed of the governor, two commandants, and four inhabitants (two each for Demerara and Essequebo), besides a secretary. Their sitting began on the first Monday of January, and the other quarters, April, July, and October. A separate court of judicature existed in Demerara, and was composed of the commandant of that river and officers (burgher), who held a sitting one month before that of Essequebo and Demerara. Appeal was allowed to the latter, or Combined Court, when the value of the suit exceeded 150 dollars. The members were elected by the College of Keizers in each district, the two senior members retiring every year; the qualification of a member consisted in the possession of 25 slaves, and a residence of three years in the colony. The commander of Essequebo was president of the Court of Justice in that district, and the Governor of Demerara president of the other Court of Justice. The law of Demerara was the law of Holland, or Roman law. Each member of the court had an equal vote on both law and fact; and all cases were decided by a majority of votes.

The administration in the colony of Berbice was similarly conducted, and need not, therefore, be recapitulated.

Besides such official and colonial appointments, there were several others, such as fiscal, secretaries, heads of departments, marshals, &c.

The duties of the fiscal (or, rather, "fiscaal," a Dutch term for an officer in Holland, similar to that of Attorney-

General of England) were various and vexatious. He was the great law-officer of the crown; his power and privilege were considerable, and his influence extensive. He was the active officer of the Commissary Court, which was composed of two members from the Court of Justice, appointed in rotation and held in Stabroek for the adjustment of petty offences, and the decision of all questions of property under the value of 600 guilders. He imposed and pronounced the fines adjudged by the court; and if his notice was neglected or resisted, he served the parties with a citation.

The country at this time was divided into districts, with a burgher captain, or militia officer, over each, who carried into effect the public regulations. The owners or representatives of estates, as already remarked, were bound to keep in good repair the public roads which intersected their properties. It was the duty of the fiscal to visit such roads and bridges, &c., thereon, and where any neglect or default existed to impose certain fines. He was, in these visits, attended by the burgher officer of the district, and a clerk from the Government secretary's office; the former to approve, the latter to witness, such approval, and to note the fines imposed. This was, perhaps, necessary, as a portion of the fines levied became the perquisite of this law-officer. The planter, upon receiving notice of the fines imposed, had the privilege of resisting the payment of them, in which case the fiscal referred the question to the Commissary Court, and pleaded the cause himself as principal law-officer of the colony. But it frequently happened that, by offering one-third or one-half of the fine named, the affair was compromised, the fiscal silenced, his conscience and pocket satisfied, and all further appeal to a court of justice rendered unnecessary. This regulation was afterwards changed, an order from Government decreed that the

fiscal should have his specific pay, and the whole of the fines were appropriated to the "ways and means of the colony." But it is very questionable whether the colony in this instance benefited by the change, as under the old system the roads were tolerably sure of being kept in order.

Such is a sketch of the colony at the time that the British Government undertook its rule; such is an outline of the social, moral, and political condition of the settlements in Guiana ceded to Great Britain in Oct. 1803. A fresh impulse was given to society by the introduction of British energy and capital; a number of persons, young men more especially, at the close of the long wars, finding themselves without prospects at home, and eager to try their fortunes in the western world, hastened out, determined to climb the golden ladder which was to lead them to wealth. West India property had then become proverbially lucrative, and the expression, "rich as a West Indian," was on the lips of every one. The young and ardent, heedless of the rumoured unwholesomeness of the climate, sailed for its shores; and where industry, intelligence, and prudence were united in the same individual, most of them lived to become independent, if not opulent. Capitalists turned a willing ear to the seductions of slave cultivations, and money in abundance was poured into the lap of the country. The number of slaves was wonderfully augmented; so that before the year 1805, they amounted to 80,000 persons.

The English, by their arrival, infused into colonial society the same elements of character which marked them at home:

Cœlum non animum mutant qui trans mare current.

Distributed throughout the country, they imparted a vigour to the efforts of the colonists which had never

before been felt;* gaiety was mingled with scientific improvements in building and cultivation; amusements were blended with efforts at moral regeneration; important changes began to pass over the institutions of the Hollander, and were carried out in household matters, laws, agricultural and commercial undertakings. The severe, prudent, but selfish policy of the Dutch was displaced by the liberal influence of English industry, order, and energy; and it happened, singularly enough, that the monarchical system of the British isles, after having vanquished republican principles in Europe, crowned its triumphs by introducing the spirit of practical liberty among a people ruled over by the Batavian Republic. The haughty aristocrat of England was about to overthrow the republican colonist or leveller, as he termed himself, with his own weapons, and, at a personal sacrifice, to undertake a task from which the self-decreed "sans culotte" had always turned back apalled.

* The steam-engine was first introduced in 1805, to work sugar-mills on plantations Belle Vue and Hague. It gradually came into general use, and in a few years superseded the water and cattle-mills on the river estates, and the wind and water-mills on the coast.

CHAPTER IX.

GOVERNOR BEAUJON SUCCEEDS COLONEL NICHOLSON, 1804—RETURN OF SLAVES CALLED FOR—COLONIAL AGENTS APPOINTED IN ENGLAND—SOME ACCOUNT OF BERBICE — DIFFERENCES RESPECTING THE ACRE-MONEY, 1805 — DEATH OF GOVERNOR BEAUJON—PUBLIC ACTS PASSED IN 1806—ARRIVAL OF GOVERNOR BENTINCK—SCARCITY OF SILVER COIN; ISSUE OF PAPER MONEY—GOVERNOR BENTINCK RETURNS TO ENGLAND — DEMERARA AND BERBICE EXCHANGE GOVERNORS—ABOLITION OF SLAVE TRADE, 1808—INTRODUCTION OF ENGLISH MISSIONARIES; THEIR INFLUENCE — LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ROSS, ACTING GOVERNOR—NEW SILVER COIN ISSUED, 1809—BERBICE PAPER MONEY—RETURN OF GOVERNOR BENTINCK—BUSH EXPEDITION—MEMORIAL OF THE FINANCIAL REPRESENTATIVES, 1810—DISPUTES BETWEEN GOVERNOR AND FISCAAL—GOVERNOR BENTINCK SUPERSEDED, 1812—MAJOR-GENERAL CARMICHAEL, ACTING GOVERNOR—DEMERARA AND ESSEQUEBO UNITED—DEATH OF ACTING GOVERNOR CARMICHAEL, 1813—BRIGADIER-GENERAL MURRAY, ACTING GOVERNOR—CHARACTER OF COLONIAL SCOTCH—INTRODUCTION OF EUROPEAN WOMEN—PREJUDICES OF CLASS AND COLOUR—CHARACTER OF CREOLES.

Upon taking possession of the united colonies of Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice, it would appear that the Commander-in-Chief, General Grinfield, appointed Lieut.-Colonel Robert Nicholson as acting Governor over the surrendered colony; and this gentleman continued to hold that important office until the receipt of a despatch from Lord Hobart, dated 26th of January, 1804, announcing that he had directed Anthony Beaujon, Esq., who had held the office when the colony capitulated in 1796, to resume the civil administration of the colony. On the

13th of August, 1804, Governor Beaujon, who had received a most flattering letter from Lord Hobart, was sworn into his high office, and took the oath of allegiance to his Majesty George the Third.

At a meeting of the Court of Policy, held on the 24th of August, the large sum of 20,000 guilders per annum, besides an additional sum of 5000 guilders, as President of the Court of Justice, were voted to the new governor as table-money.

By a proclamation, which was published on the 24th of November, the destitute state of the public funds was made known, and the following capitation-tax was fixed upon, viz.:

	Guilders.
Working male and female slaves, each	3 10
Children from 3 to 12 years of age	1
House servant (slaves) if 3 years of age	6
Do. do. if 4 do.	10
Do. do. if 5 do.	15
Do. do. if 6 do.	20
Do. do. if 7 do.	25
Do. do. if 9 do.	30
Do. do. above 9 do.	40

Certain persons were to be exempted from the payment of these taxes, namely:—Planters resident on their estates; the governor, who was entitled to twenty servants; the members of the different courts; also the secretaries, the receivers of government and colonial chests, vendue-master, and certain other public officers, who were each limited to four servants. Tradespeople were required to pay for each slave employed at the rate of 7 guilders per head. The women of colour were to pay 10 guilders. A general return of all slaves was also called for to the 31st of December, 1804.

About this time a petition of the inhabitants to the Court of Policy stated, that they had supplied articles for the use of the Batavian Government at the instance of the late Governor Meertens, for which they had received

bills of exchange drawn by him and the Book-keeper General on the Batavian Council of the American Colonies; but on the colony reverting to the British, these bills were protested, under the provisions of the 4th Article of the capitulation, which guaranteed the payment of all debts contracted by the late Government.

Early the next year, a colonial agent (Mr. Adam Gordon) was appointed, at a salary of 500*l.* per annum, to superintend in England the affairs of Essequebo and Demerara; but he was superseded in 1806, and two other persons were appointed to act conjointly.

The sister colony of Berbice was in most respects similarly situated. Its laws, system of administration, mode of agriculture, and social condition, were almost identical. But there were certain peculiarities in the circumstances of Berbice which require special notice. At the time when it fell into the hands of the British, September, 1803, there was actually no governor, that officer, A. J. Imbyze Van Batenburg, having previously departed for Europe to give an account to the States-General of the surrender of the colony in 1796 to the English. In his absence the administration was carried on by a Provisional Government of two persons, together with the other members and officers of the Legislature. These functionaries ceded their power to Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Nicholson, who was appointed acting-governor by General Grinfield, and who filled this situation until June, 1804, when Governor Van Batenburg was restored to his post. It appears that this officer, whilst on his voyage to Holland, was taken prisoner, together with his whole family, by an English vessel cruising in the Channel, and carried to England. During his detention in that country he became aware of the capture of Berbice by the English; but fortune in this instance befriended him more than he expected.

On leaving the colony he had taken with him a complimentary address (Dank adres) presented to him by the inhabitants of Berbice along with a more substantial gift, viz., a silver table-service of the value of 8000 florins, or about 500*l.*

The address had been numerously signed by the principal inhabitants, who were in general satisfied with his administration. This flattering testimonial, together with his local knowledge and experience, made so favourable an impression upon the English Court that it was considered desirable to secure his future services, and he was accordingly re-appointed, and, returning to the colony on the 25th June, 1804, was reinstated as governor. But it would appear that his views and opinions during his absence had undergone a total revolution, for soon after his arrival he announced that, in accordance with his instructions, he would in future take over the administration of the *colonial* plantations (he no longer called them society plantations, as formerly) in the name of the King. At the sitting of the Court of Policy, held on the 2nd July following, he availed himself of the opportunity of declaring that some of the inhabitants of the colony were indebted in large sums to the Receiver-General, which they would be immediately called upon to pay, in order to meet the existing deficiency, observing at the same time that the acre-money (akkergeld) or tax on property, formed a large item in the amount. The members of the court, astonished at such a speech from the governor, replied that in conformity with the articles of capitulation of the 24th September, 1803, the acre-money, as well as the plantations themselves, and other properties of the society of Berbice, could not be considered in any other light than as private property, separate and special; and that it could not be otherwise regarded until proof to the contrary

was brought forward and established. The governor, however, maintained that the acre-money was included under the taxes (Lasten), income, and other moneys formerly paid to the Dutch or Batavian Government, and were now due to his Britannic Majesty. The court, notwithstanding, refused to take the "ipse dixit" of the governor on this subject. Orders were consequently issued by the governor to collect the acre-money; but, with a few exceptions, the inhabitants exhibited a determination to resist the payment, declaring that any such orders or publications emanating from the governor without the concurrence and sanction of the other members of the court were null and void—in fact, unconstitutional and illegal.

In the following year, 13th February, 1805, another publication was issued to the same effect, but without shaking the resolution of the inhabitants, who still maintained that the money was exclusively private property, and could not be interfered with. The popularity of the governor now began rapidly to decline, and open complaints broke out in all parts of the colony, which took a distinct and affirmative shape on the 12th April, when a large meeting of the people was held in New Amsterdam, for the purpose of considering the necessity of remonstrating against these arbitrary proceedings, and of submitting their case to the sovereign. A committee of twelve persons was formed to investigate and report upon the subject. On the 23rd April another meeting, still more numerously attended, was convened, when a declaration was drawn up, declaring that, as the colony was ruled not by a governor, but by a governor as president and a council, any order or publication issued by the governor alone was invalid and illegal.

Three persons were accordingly elected (G. Baillie, Edward Van Hartha, and Lambert Blair, the two first

resident in London, and the third then in the colony, but on the point of quitting it) as a committee to conduct their case, and another committee was appointed in Berbice to open a correspondence with them. Shortly after this arrangement Lambert Blair proceeded to Europe furnished with proofs and other evidence of the justice of the common cause.

The colonists subsequently wished to publish their declaration in the local gazette, but the governor cautioned the printer, Mr. Douglas, against its admission. The declaration was printed notwithstanding on a separate piece of paper, which gave equal offence to the governor, who applied to the fiscal or law-officer to prosecute the parties concerned. This officer, however, viewed the subject in a different light, and, refusing to obey the order of the governor, actually resigned his office. After considerable delay and difficulty a lawyer from Demerara was prevailed upon by the governor to take up the matter, and with his assistance and counsel steps were adopted for the recovery of the disputed acre-money. A commissioned officer (Humbert) was ordered to summons the inhabitants alleged to be indebted in this tax to pay up forthwith, under penalty of "parate executie."

Among the persons thus summoned was L. Blair for arrears of about 60,000 guilders, in reference to possessions held on the east sea-coast of Berbice, although it was known, *ex officio*, by the governor, that this gentleman had made previous arrangements with the Batavian Government exonerating him from such payment.

The commissioned officer or receiver, finding an inferior officer, bailiff, or deurwaerder, willing to enter upon the obnoxious duty, appointed him to act. The inhabitants, thus pressed, presented another remonstrance, and resisted by all the means in their power. The governor, however, was determined to proceed to extremi-

ties, and authorised the bailiff to call in military aid in case of further opposition. This threat had the desired effect; bills of exchange were offered under protest by the defaulters, drawn to order of the Right Honourable Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, and handed over by the bailiff to the receiver-general.

While these disturbing incidents were agitating the colony of Berbice, the settlements of Demerara and Essequebo were conducted in a satisfactory and peaceable manner by Governor Beaujon, who unfortunately, however, died in October. Upon his death, the officer highest in command was Brigadier-General James Montgomery, who assumed the government, *ad interim*, on the 19th of October, and having assembled the Court of Policy, in conformity with a document found on the late governor's decease, entitled "Sketch of Instructions for Demerara and Essequebo," he addressed the members of the Court, and, lamenting his deficiency and want of experience, earnestly sought their counsel and advice. The Court of Policy offered to defray the burial expenses of the late governor, but this mark of respect was courteously declined by the widow of the departed chief. In the next year, 1806, several measures of public interest were enacted. A premium of one hundred guilders was offered for the capture of each runaway slave; and the same sum for "bush negroes." The sum of fifty guilders was offered for each right hand of such slaves, if not taken alive. At a sitting of the Court of Policy, on the 29th of April, in consequence of a petition of the inhabitants, a duty of two guilders per gallon was charged on rum imported, except that for the use of the garrison. A prohibition was enacted to export any colonial wood, except firewood, under a duty of thirty stivers for every cubic foot. A schooner (the *Jack*) and a brig (the *Demerara*) were purchased by the colony to pro-

tect its rivers and coasts. These vessels, with fitting-out and repairs, cost upwards of eighty thousand guilders.

On the 8th of May, 1806, H. W. Bentinck, Esquire, arrived in an English frigate. He was received at the governor's stelling by the officers, under a salute of the guns of the fort, and duly escorted to the Court of Policy, where Brigadier Montgomery, the acting governor, had vainly endeavoured to assemble an extraordinary meeting of its members on the occasion. Only two gentlemen attended, the others being absent in the country. The acting governor having thanked this scanty gathering for their assistance and counsel, introduced the new lieutenant-governor, who was formally sworn into office, a formal proclamation announcing his installation to the inhabitants.

The usual table-money, twenty-five thousand guilders, was accorded in the following session (28th of July), when his excellency communicated to the members of the Court a despatch, dated 26th of March, 1806, from his Majesty's principal Secretary of State, requiring an additional premium to be paid on British North America salted fish, and prohibiting the importation of fish from the United States.

A proclamation also appeared to dress the militia in uniform (red), in accordance with the views entertained by the late acting governor. An order was also passed to build a beacon on the east sea-coast, the cost of which was not to exceed twenty thousand guilders; and a tax on shipping, of six or ten stivers per ton, was raised for its support; as also a stipulated weight of sand or gravel for the use of the colony (say five tons of gravel for every fifty tons of shipping), except from vessels under one hundred tons. In default of payment of this latter tax, the sum of five guilders was to be paid for every ton of ballast due.

The great scarcity of silver coin this year led to an issue of paper-money, in forms called "goods," to the amount of twenty-three thousand guilders, in the following proportion:

4000	of one	guilder each
3000	„ two	„
2000	„ three	„
2000	„ four	„
500	„ ten	„
500	„ fifteen	„
500	„ twenty	„
200	„ thirty	„
200	„ forty	„
100	„ fifty	„
50	„ sixty	„
30	„ seventy	„
20	„ eighty	„
20	„ ninety	„
20	„ one hundred	„

These "goods" were to be signed in the name of the court by two, three, or four members, and countersigned by the colonial receiver in the following manner:

No. (L. S.) Guilders_____Stabroek.

Goods by the Colony of Essequebo and Demerara,

_____ Guilders.

Issued this _____ by authority of Lieut.-Governor,

by Receiver_____ and Court of Policy.

Signed by_____

Members.

A petition from the inhabitants in Essequebo prayed the lieutenant-governor and Court of Policy to remove the present capital of that district to a more convenient site, and also to place buoys on the banks; which requests were subsequently taken into consideration.

The following taxes were also imposed this year. For each male and female working slave, three guilders. A tax of two per cent. on the revenue of each individual.

The members of the courts of justice, finding heavy

demands upon their time, applied to the Combined Court for some remuneration; but this was refused. On the application, however, of the fiscal, an exemption from the payment of colonial duties was allowed for one year, but subsequently, in 1808, the members were paid at the rate of forty guilders per sitting-day.

In March, 1807, Governor Bentinck read a letter to the Court of Policy which had been received by his predecessor, Governor Beaujon, and which was dated 25th January, 1804, from Lord Hobart, to the effect that, in future, British subjects should by preference be appointed to any situations which might become vacant. He also deemed it advisable to cause a new election of persons to fill the present college of electors, in consequence of some irregularities which had taken place in Essequebo. In the following month, April 27th, his excellency announced his intention of proceeding to England in consequence of ill health; the administration of the affairs of the colony to devolve on Brigadier-General James Montgomery, and the president of the courts of justice, V. A. Heyliger. Previous to his retirement, the governor read a despatch received from Mr. Windham, dated Downing-street, 9th March, 1807, calling attention to a bill then passing through Parliament relative to the abolition of the slave trade. This announcement took the members of the court completely by surprise, and caused them to break up with marked consternation. Yet they ought not to have been wholly unprepared for such a contingency, as in the previous year his excellency had proclaimed to an extraordinary meeting of the court, that he had received orders from England requiring correct returns of slaves to be sent in by colonists, with a view to regulate a limited importation. In default of such returns, a penalty of 500 guilders was incurred, half of which was to be paid to the governor's chest, and the other half to the fiscaal.

On the 2nd May, 1807, acting Governor Montgomery was for the second time sworn into office, but did not long retain it; for on September the 14th he announced his intention of resigning in favour of Lieutenant-Colonel Nicholson, who, since the retirement of Governor Van Batenburg from the administration of Berbice in 1806, had presided as acting governor. The two military officers, in point of fact, exchanged situations, and Brigadier-General Montgomery, to the regret of the inhabitants of Essequebo and Demerara, proceeded to Berbice, which situation, I believe, he hoped to keep, as hitherto no civil governor had come from home since Governor Van Batenburg's retirement. Lieutenant-Colonel Nicholson was installed September the 14th.

During this year considerable distress was felt throughout the West Indies. In these colonies the inhabitants still suffered from attacks of pirates, and were obliged to call in the aid of an armed schooner, The *Affiance*, from Barbadoes.

Early in the year, March the 24th, 1808, the African slave trade was abolished, but slaves continued under certain restrictions and regulations to be imported into the colony, in limited numbers, from other sources for many years afterwards, or until 1823. This was the first serious blow aimed at the principle of slavery, and it is gratifying to record it as having marked at so early a date the administration of the English.

The year 1808 was also memorable for the introduction of a new social element, which was ordained to play an important part in the future condition of the colony —namely, the arrival of some missionaries from the London Missionary Society.

It is not intended in this place to enter largely into the consideration of the effects produced by the introduction of the missionaries, as the history of their labours will be traced in another part of this work in connexion

with the religious and moral progress of the colony; but some notice of them is called for here, as they soon became intimately mixed up with the social and political institutions of the country. The Parent Society, in sending them out, was no doubt actuated by the noblest motives. Their ostensible object was the liberation of the African from spiritual darkness; and had their exertions been strictly directed to the regeneration of the depraved heart of the slave, and their religious zeal been tempered with moderation and discretion, much misunderstanding would have been averted, and they would doubtless have been allowed to pursue, undisturbed, their unostentatious and charitable design. Leaving England as they did, embued with an ardent desire to spread the benefits of the Gospel; mild and simple in their manners; actuated apparently by the purest intentions, and exhibiting holy and devout conduct, they had, notwithstanding, imbibed in all its bitterness the strong prejudice which at that time existed in England against the planter. Nor were the circumstances which met them on their arrival much calculated to modify their opinions. They beheld the slave toiling under his yoke, and heard the cry of complaint, and the stroke of the whip, rising around them on all sides. They witnessed the daily life and animal existence of the African and his descendants such as we have described it. They were apalled at the despotism and the hardihood exhibited by the white man; at the unlimited extent of punishment, and the means of terrible vengeance he wielded; and were dismayed at the revolting picture of moral abasement so prevalent throughout the land. It must be admitted that the state of society presented a debased and humiliating spectacle. There were but two churches in the whole of British Guiana; one a Lutheran church, richly endowed, in Berbice, the other a Dutch reformed church, upon Fort Island, the ancient capital of Essequebo. In Demerara no attempts

had as yet been made to erect a place of worship, notwithstanding that the metropolis, Stabroek, was fast rising into importance; and it was not until 1810 that a church, called St. George's, was built, being the first episcopal church established in Guiana. At this period divine service was read at the Court-house by the chaplain to the garrison. The missionaries needed little more than a glance at these circumstances to confirm their worst prejudices. The first impressions thus made upon their minds were never effaced. The gloomy side of the subject was alone considered. The "Revers de la Médaille" was never regarded. The generosity of most of the planters, their liberality and kindness to dependants, their hospitality to strangers, and their estimable private qualities, were regarded with indifference by men who viewed them in no other light than as slave-owners and cruel task-masters. It would have been happy for the colony if ownership and tyranny had not been rendered synonymous, and if the true character of the race of planters, kind and generous on the whole, had never been disgraced by brutal exceptions and individual atrocity. The missionaries, objecting generally to the system of slavery, admitted of no exception. They sternly rebuked all alike. It has been truly said by a great man, that "what is morally wrong can never be politically right;" and a still higher authority declares, "A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

Roused by the depressed condition of the slave, the missionaries awakened feelings of opposition and dislike to the masters. They engendered a new sentiment in the mind of the slave. It was not, therefore, likely that two such conflicting influences as these of the planter and the missionary should combine in social harmony; that the hand which endeavoured to pour balm into the

wounds of the bondsman should grasp in friendship that of the oppressor; or that the missionary, mixing freely with the slave, and entering into his views, in order to gain him over to the grand scheme of salvation, should at the same time assimilate himself to the lives, habits, and opinions of the slave-owners. We shall here dismiss the subject for the present. We shall hereafter see how this contest of antagonistic views ultimately developed itself.

In April, 1808, it was resolved by the Court of Policy that no petitions written in Dutch should be received, unless accompanied by an English translation, and also that all petitions were to be sent in to the secretary at least eight days before the meeting of the court. Certain rules and regulations were also drawn up for a house of correction or workhouse, for the confinement of convicts who had been sentenced by either of the courts of justice. A threatened conspiracy to revolt was reported to be existing on plantation Lusignan, on the east sea-coast; but it led to no results, except an expedition of the troops in that neighbourhood.

On the 24th of June, Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Ross, of the 70th Regiment, in obedience to the command of General Bowyer, took over the civil administration of Essequebo and Demerara, and Acting-Governor Nicholson retired. The new acting-governor proved himself an able and active officer; but, in consequence of bad health, was soon obliged to resign his post. During his incumbency, a petition was drawn up by the inhabitants, praying his Majesty to prepare a new silver coin for the use of this colony. The coin in circulation for many years past had been rather limited, and the Portuguese gold coin "Johannes," called by the colonists a Joe, and of the value of eight dollars at that time, which was in general use, had been so adulterated by plugging with

copper and brass, as to have lost considerably its intrinsic value. About 5000*l.* worth were withdrawn from general circulation, and paper "goods," proclaimed to be legal tender, were issued instead. Subsequently the "Joe notes" were substituted. This new paper-money was issued to the amount of 50,000 joes, equal to 1,100,000 guilders, or, at the rate of exchange then current (two and a half guilders to the dollar), 440,000 dollars. The loss sustained by the colony from the plugged joes was calculated to amount to 10,000*l.*; but when these joes were withdrawn from circulation, the inhabitants did not suffer by the depreciation in their value, the paper joe, of the value of twenty-two guilders, being substituted for the gold coin.

The following is an estimate of the proposed new silver coin, petitioned for by the inhabitants, payment for which was to be made by bills of exchange:

£4000 in pieces of	3 guilders,	to weigh	15 pennyweights,	equal to	3s.	9d.
2000	2	10			2	6
2000	1	5			1	3
2000	½	2½			0	7½

The governor, in his despatch to Lord Castlereagh, represented the justice of the petition, and stated that the then lowest coin was the Danish bit, composed of silver and copper, and equal to five stivers or four pence. The plugged joes, about 28,000 in number, were sent to England, along with the governor's dispatch, and Mr. Baillie was appointed agent to conduct the monetary arrangements.

This gentleman invested the money in the funds, and the investment, though not specially pledged for that purpose, was regarded as a security for the ultimate redemption of the paper issue.

In the year 1809 a letter was received in which the failure of Messrs. Campbell, Harper, and Baillie was

announced, as well as the fact that the money of the colony entrusted to their charge (11,263*l.* 9s. 7d.) had been appropriated by that firm to its own use. The trustees of this money were Messrs. Campbell, Baillie, and King. The Court of Policy refused to become creditors to the bankrupt estates, and applied to the trustees for payment.*

An annual sum of 2000*l.*, raised by a tax, continued till the year 1822 to be remitted to London, and, together with the accruing interest of the previous instalments, to be placed in the funds for the benefit of the colony. By the year 1822 the stocks thus held amounted to upwards of 150,000*l.*, and the amount of paper money had, by additional issues in 1815 and 1816, been increased to 75,807 joes. The further history of this paper money we shall give under the years 1824, 1825, and 1839.†

The Berbice paper money was much more ancient, and stood upon quite a different footing. It consisted at first of bills of exchange on the proprietors of the colony in Holland, drawn for their salaries by the colonial officers, and certified by the colonial authorities to be good. These bills passed from hand to hand as a circulating medium. Additional paper money was afterwards issued to meet the public exigencies by the colonial authorities, but no fund was provided for its redemption, nor was any such provision secured when, upon the cession of Berbice to the British, certain estates and other property were made over to the late proprietors.

At a meeting of the Combined Court during this year, 1809, it was resolved to redeem the issued colonial goods by tenders for bills of exchange instead of specie. The

* In 1820 the colony assumed the debt towards Messrs. Campbell, Harper, and Baillie, absolved Messrs. James Baillie and King, and appointed Messrs. Higgins, King, and M'Larel the new trustees.

† Minutes of Court of Policy, 1819.

holders of the colonial goods thus tendering were to receive bills for one-third of the amount of their tenders, and the other two-thirds were to be issued to them in a new colony paper—the paper joe, already alluded to, value 22 guilders—secured on the money in Mr. Baillie's hands.

This gentleman had written from London on the 26th April, stating that the silver coinage prayed for was granted by the Government, but that the coin to be struck should not resemble that of other states, it being contrary to law. He mentioned having bought 10,000*l.* sterling of Spanish dollars at 5s. 4d. per ounce, and that the gold had sold at 4*l.* the ounce, more than had been expected. An alloy was used in the striking of the new coin, to defray the necessary expenses. Mr. Baillie had invested about 22,000*l.* in Government securities, and had reserved the surplus to meet current expenses.*

From a report drawn up the next year (1810) by a committee appointed to correspond with Mr. Baillie on the subject, it appears—

That the produce of the plugged joes amounted to		£34,744 8 8
That the amount of silver, received per *Hebe*, was	£10,770 12 6	
" " " *Peryvian*,	2,701 3 1	
		13,471 15 7
Leaving a balance of		£21,272 13 1

The attention of Governor Ross was not confined to the monetary interests of the colony. In consequence of the American war it became necessary to protect these rising settlements. Rear-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, the commander-in-chief of the naval forces in the West Indies, was addressed on this important subject, and directions were given for stationing certain vessels on the South American station—one at Surinam, another

* Minutes of Court of Policy, 1809.

at Berbice, a third at Demerara, and a fourth at the Orinoco; while four armed cruisers or schooners were ordered to ply between these vessels, thus keeping up a constant inter-communication.

It now became more than ever necessary to protect the sugar-laden ships on their passage to Europe, and convoys had long been employed for that purpose. The time and place of rendezvous was in general some windward island in the West Indies, and all vessels desirous of joining were required to be ready at the place and time appointed; but the inconvenience to these colonies was especially great, and a separate convoy was asked for.

On the retirement of Governor Ross from ill-health the Court of Policy agreed to present him with a sword of the value of 100*l*. A handsome letter accompanied this testimonial, complimenting him upon his zeal, talents, and love of order. Major-General Samuel Dalrymple was sworn into office as his successor on the 8th April, 1809; but on the 19th May, following, an extraordinary meeting of the Court of Policy was assembled to receive their former governor, H. W. Bentinck, Esq., who exhibited to the court his commission from his Majesty George the Third, dated 30th January, 1809. A proclamation was issued on the 22nd June, announcing to the inhabitants the renewal of his administration.

In the year 1810 a successful expedition was conducted by Mr. Edmonstone and the Bucks against the Maroons or bush negroes. On the first arrival of the British, in 1796, several military excursions of Dutch troops and others had been attempted with a similar object, but had entirely failed; and in the appointment of Lieutenant-Colonel Hislop a general amnesty was proclaimed for three months, copies of which were sent in a block-tin box to the Maroons, who, in 1795, had

thrown the colony into considerable peril. The expenses of the late bush expeditions were very heavy, and in October of this year a deputation proceeded to Berbice to arrange with the Court of Policy respecting the amount severally to be paid by each settlement, and the sum of 100,000 guilders was agreed upon, one-third of which was to be paid by Berbice, and the other two-thirds by Essequebo and Demerara.* This arrangement became subsequently the subject of serious disputes between Demerara and Berbice, the latter colony repudiating the demand made upon it.

About this period a conference was held between the governor and the Court of Policy and an Indian chief named Manariwau, who was reputed to possess considerable power and authority among the Caribs. The object of this conference was a request on the part of this chief, that the members of the court would purchase certain prisoners in his possession, as well as others which he might obtain. To this the court objected, but promised, that whenever such prisoners should be handed over to the colony, annual presents should be forwarded to himself and his tribe. These prisoners were for the most part runaway slaves and bush negroes. A treaty upon this basis was accordingly entered into between the whites and the King of the Caribs. A few years afterwards, however, when the Indians came to Governor Carmichael for their presents, they were refused on the ground that such presents could not be claimed as a right, but only as a gift, or boon. The cost of the presents (which may have been the reason for refusing them) is stated to have amounted to the sum of 2000*l.* per annum.

An important meeting of the Combined Court was held on the 4th of December, 1810, when a memorial or

* Minutes of Court of Policy, 1801.

address was read by the financial representatives, to the following effect:

They demanded to ascertain the exact nature and duties of the financial representatives, and stated that several such requests had formerly been made by them without receiving any satisfactory answer. Neither was the origin of this body known, although constituted within the memory of some of their members. They were told that they had been appointed by a resolution of the Court of Policy, subsequent to the capture of the colony in 1796; but from what they could learn, it would appear only that the court had sanctioned the election of six financial representatives instead of four keizers, who formerly, with the members or counsellors of the Court of Policy, constituted the Combined Court; but this only proves that the court had originated such a change; neither could they have legally changed the existing constitution without the sanction of a higher authority. But that some such sanction was given by the Government of Holland, is rendered probable from various communications contained in a memorial presented to General Whyte, on the surrender of the colony in 1796. By this memorial, which they concluded to be authentic, it appeared that the insufficient representation of the inhabitants of these colonies had been complained of at a very early period, and that representations to this effect had been made to the authorities previous to the appointment of Baron Van Grovenstein in 1793, and which representations were attended to; for, in the 19th and 39th articles of his instructions from the Colonial Board, allusions were found to this subject; so that having communicated the nature of these instructions to the members of the Court of Policy, it was agreed to summon the four keizers (two from Essequebo and two from Deme-

rara) who, with the Court of Policy, were to constitute a combined court, in order to deliberate on the best mode of *raising* the necessary taxes; but it appeared that, during Baron Grovenstein's administration, this contemplated arrangement was never effected; and that it was not until after his departure from the colony, and during the serious disturbances consequent thereon in 1795, the provisional acting governors (consisting of two members of the Court of Policy, in rotation, who acted jointly for eight days) summoned the four keizers to deliberate *not only on raising the taxes*, but actually, conjointly with the four counsellors of the Court of Policy, to deliberate and vote on the disbursements of the expenses; which act evidently accorded with the spirit of several other despatches received from Holland on this subject. But it appeared afterwards, that the keizers were deemed improper representatives for the purposes of taxation, &c., inasmuch as they held their seats for life; hence it was considered preferable to substitute other persons called financial representatives, who, elected by the keizers, were to continue in office for two years only. It was presumed, however, that on such appointments taking place, the same powers which had been conferred on the keizers would descend to the financial representatives; and that these latter were, therefore, not intended to deliberate only on the best mode of raising the taxes, but also to assist in the expenditure of the public money, and to be consulted in all cases involving the outlay of the colonial cash. The financial representatives therefore considered that, unless such were at present the powers invested in them, their sitting with the honourable court once a year for any other purpose could be of no possible use to their constituents. Strongly impressed with these sentiments, the financial representatives requested the Court of Policy to state what they considered to be their views on the duties and powers of the former, boldly de-

claring at the same time, that in the event of their not being admitted to the exercise of what they deemed their rights and privileges, they must decline (however reluctant they might feel to impede the public business of the colony) taking any part in the laying on of taxes, over the expenditure of which they had no control.

(Signed) JOHN JUSTUS DELGES,
JOHN WILSON,
RICHARD NUGENT,
THOMAS MEWBURN,
EDWARD BISHOP,
JAMES RUTHERFORD.

On the discussion arising out of this able document, the justice of the remarks was admitted, but it was deemed contrary to the then existing constitution to grant to the financial representatives the exercise of the powers claimed; they were requested, however, to draw up a memorial embodying such measures as they considered most advisable, which, after being submitted to the Court of Policy, would be forwarded to H.M. Government. Moreover, it was resolved that should any necessity arise in the mean time for incurring an extra expenditure, and should the subject permit of the necessary delay requisite to convene a combined court, the financial representatives were to be consulted on the expediency thereof.

The financial representatives lost no time in preparing their memorial, which was submitted to the Court of Policy two days after, viz., on the 6th December; but at a subsequent meeting in the following year, on inquiring into the fate of this document, they learnt, to their astonishment, that it had never been sent to England, a majority of the court not deeming it sufficiently supported by the public. The indignation of the financial representatives was excessive on being made aware of this circum-

stance. They declared that they would no longer act, and refused to vote the supplies, but Governor Bentinck was equally firm, and threatened, in case they persisted in their determination, to arrest the refractory members, and ship them to Europe in a gun-brig. This menace had the desired effect, and things went on again as usual.

The following taxes were for the present proposed:

Sugar (Dutch weight per 100 lbs.)	2 stivers.
Rum (for every 100 gallons.)	12 „
Coffee (for every 100 lbs.)	5 „
Cotton (for every 100 lbs.)	9 „

These taxes were estimated to yield the following amount:

	guilders.
18,000 hhds. sugar	21,600
8,000 puncheons rum	5,280
2,000 „ molasses	1,000
12 million lbs. coffee	30,000
10 „ „ cotton	45,000
	102,880

This produce tax was raised in order to cover the expenses of the late expedition against the bush negroes.

The other taxes on slaves, wines, incomes, hucksters, transient traders (raised from 2½ to 4 per cent.), on horses, carriages, &c., to continue as before.

The sum of 300 guineas was also appropriated for the purchase of plate to be presented to Mr. Baillie for his diligent services in the affairs of the colony.

The police regulations were altered and amended. An inspector-general, with a salary of four thousand guilders per annum, was appointed for the town, together with two assistants, subject, however, to two commissioners to be appointed by the court. Mr. Van der Welden held the first office. Subsequently, or in 1812, a Board of Police was appointed by the governor and the Court of Policy for the management of Georgetown.

In the early part of the year 1811 circulars were sent round to several of the British governors in the West

Indies, and, among others, to Governor Bentinck, requiring him to forward to England a report on the condition of the colony, on the number of slaves, and their location; on the number of clergy, including an account of the missionary and other preachers throughout the country; to send also returns of convictions and punishments awarded to the slaves, as well as a statement of such acts and laws as had been passed by the Court of Policy of late.

In consequence of the representations made to him, and perhaps for other reasons, Governor Bentinck issued a proclamation on the 25th May prohibiting the negroes from attending places of public divine worship in the unrestricted manner at that time in practice. This measure of course occasioned much dissatisfaction, and complaints having been forwarded to England, the governor was directed to recal the proclamation, and advised to have all chapels and places of divine worship forthwith registered.

About the same time, the governor and the fiscal, Van Berchel, had, unfortunately, some very unpleasant misunderstandings, and the former having suspended the fiscal for disrespectful language and dishonest practises, was directed by the Secretary of State, Lord Liverpool, to appoint a court of inquiry to investigate Mr. Van Berchel's conduct, and to report their decision to England. On the receipt of this despatch, the governor wished to nominate a court formed of members of the Court of Policy, but Mr. Van Berchel objected, on legal grounds, and maintained that a court competent to decide on such matters could only be composed of members selected from the Court of Justice.

At the commencement of the year 1812, Governor Bentinck having neglected to recal the proclamation of the 25th May last as directed, was superseded in the government of the colony, and by a despatch dated 25th

February, Major-General Carmichael was appointed to act as lieutenant-governor until his successor should arrive from England. At the same time, the ex-Governor Bentinck was ordered to return to England to give an account of his administration; but having, after consultation with the Court of Policy in the interim, written to the Secretary of State, assigning the reasons which induced him to delay or modify the withdrawal of the proclamation of the 25th May, the Home Government appear to have been so well satisfied with his explanation, that the recal of the proclamation was subsequently countermanded, if it had not already taken place, by a despatch to Governor Carmichael; and in about two years afterwards Mr. Bentinck was nominated governor of Berbice. On quitting Demerara, an address was presented to him by the inhabitants, but its publication was prohibited by Governor Carmichael, who considered its language offensive to the Home Government.

In the course of this year the Courts of Justice were remodelled after the following manner:

1st. The Courts of Justice of Demerara and Essequebo were united into one, to be held at the former place.

2nd. The office of president of the Court of Justice was made separate from that of the governor.

3rd. The English language was substituted for the Dutch in legal pleadings, &c.

The first president appointed was Thomas Franckland, Esq. His salary was fixed at 30,000 guilders, half to be paid from the Sovereign's chest, and the other half from the colonial chest.

In consequence of the abolition of so many offices, and the reduction of establishments in Essequebo, a saving was effected to the colony of 100,000 guilders annually in the way of salaries. There were about 18,000 slaves in Essequebo at this period.

The districts of Demerara and Essequebo were united on the 28th April of this year. Their formerly separate institutions were consolidated, and the name of the former capital of Demerara, Stabroek, was changed to Georgetown. But while the bonds of union between these two settlements were drawn closer, a serious quarrel existed with Berbice, the cause of which arose about the payment of the expenses incurred in the bush expedition of 1810, already alluded to. It appears that some of the inhabitants of Berbice refused their proportion of the money, which so exasperated the Demerarians, that a proclamation of one of the courts was issued, declaring that such Berbiceans should be exiled from Demerara. This order was, however, suspended by Governor Carmichael, who did everything in his power to reconcile the differences which unhappily existed. The matter was subsequently referred to the British Government, and the governor gave full explanations about it in his despatches to London.

The vessels of war formerly stationed off the rivers and coasts to protect these settlements having been withdrawn, the colonies of Demerara and Berbice were blockaded by American privateers, who captured several vessels laden with sugar. But they were finally attacked and chased away by colonial ships, voluntarily armed and equipped, a body of the militia having embarked as marines.

The sentence of the Court of Justice on Mr. Van Berchel was transmitted to the Secretary of State. He was honourably acquitted, and Mr. Paddevort, who had been appointed in his place by Governor Bentinck, was deprived of office. Under this new appointment the fiscal, instead of being paid by fees, &c., as formerly, was to receive an annual salary of 27,000 guilders. Mr. A. M. Meertens was also nominated first exploiteur, or mar-

shal. Governor Carmichael at the same time forwarded an application to England respecting the amount of salary he was to receive, and was informed that he was only entitled to 12,000 guilders, being half the amount respectively paid to the former governors, Beaujon and Bentinck.

The Imperial Government being at this period at war with the United States of Ameriea, it was decreed that any coin or bullion seized in American vessels should be delivered over to the senior officer of the commissariat department, who was empowered to draw or deposit bills on the Lords of the Treasury for the amount.

Governor Carmichael in the course of this year issued a proclamation on his own authority abolishing the existence of the College of Financial Representatives, and constituting the College of Keizers to act in that capacity. He also extended the right of suffrage to all persons paying an income-tax on 10,000 guilders, or who had twenty-five slaves in possession. The incorporation, however, of the two colleges, or the combination of their originally distinct functions into one, was not approved of in England; nevertheless, the governor received no order to repeal it, but in a despatch dated 25th November, 1812, he was censured for exercising such a stretch of authority, and was ordered not to attempt such innovations in future without the sanction and authority of the British Government. This censure was in some degree qualified by a complimentary recognition of the manner in which he had suppressed a feeling of insubordination which at the instigation of some white persons had lately displayed itself in the colony, and expressions of approbation were bestowed upon him for the system he had adopted for the protection of the colony against any attack on the part of the Americans.

In the same year that Governor Carmichael, having

constituted the College of Keizers the Financial Representatives of the colony, he granted permission to the Combined Court to vote on the items in the estimate. This was done without the sanction or even the knowledge of the Home Government, and was opposed to the previous law and practice (see ordinance constituting the Financial Representatives, passed by Antony Beaujon and Court of Policy, 1796).* In subsequent years this privilege became a subject of discord between the members of the Combined Court and the Crown; for upon the fact being communicated to the authorities in England, measures were taken by the Crown to restrict the Combined Court to its original and legitimate functions. As a matter of course this restriction was resisted by the elective members, who refused, rather than give up the point, to exercise any functions at all. After the separation of the College of Keizers from the Financial Representatives in 1831, the latter body was confined to its former duties as established by ordinance. This controversy was eventually the cause of an important change in the system of government, leading ultimately to the formation of the first civil list, established on the 1st January, 1836, to continue in force until the 31st December, 1840.

Major-General Carmichael having died of locked jaw (tetanus) on the 11th May, 1813, he was succeeded by Brigadier-General Murray, who arrived from Berbice on the 17th May, where he had lately officiated as acting lieutenant-governor in the absence of Robert Gordon, Esq.

He was received by Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Codd, who had acted as the officer administering the government from the 12th May to the 17th, when he handed

* Local Guide, page 10.

over his authority to his superior officer. Governor Murray had apparently given satisfaction during his administration of the government of Berbice, at least to the colonists, for on his retirement they presented him with a complimentary address and a handsome sword.

Immediately after his arrival at Demerara he addressed a letter, dated 24th May, 1813, to Earl Bathurst, in which he represented the colony as being in a very disturbed and agitated state, owing to the existence of several factions, which were at variance with each other; he further threw out insinuations against the conduct of the late governor, whom he represented as reserved and haughty in his manner towards his subordinate officers, not acquainting any one (not even his secretary) with the nature of the despatches received from or forwarded to England. This inculpatory despatch closed with an expression of regret that the slovenly and imperfect manner in which the official papers had been kept would prevent him from becoming acquainted at present with the views or orders of the Home Government.* In another despatch, dated the 22nd June, he alluded to the great resources of the colony, especially to the importance of its furniture woods and timber-trees, and promised to forward specimens to England as early as possible.

The salary of the previous governor had been 4000*l.* per annum, but in August, 1813, a despatch was received from Earl Bathurst, in which the salary of the governor of Demerara and Essequebo was fixed at 5000*l.* sterling, half to be paid out of the King's chest and the remainder from the colonial treasury. This sum was given in lieu of all fees and allowances, and it was expressly enjoined on the governor that he was not to accept any additional

* See Letter-book containing the governor's despatches.

grants or allowances which might be offered by the colony.

On the 24th August, Governor Murray announced to the Court of Policy that he had been appointed to Berbice, and having retired, Colonel Codd was sworn in as acting governor, and continued to administer the ordinary business of the colony until the 9th of December, when Brigadier-General Murray returned from Berbice, and exhibited to the Court of Policy his commission as Lieutenant-Governor of Demerara and Essequebo.

His efforts to obtain so rich an appointment in lieu of the comparatively insignificant one in point of pay of a brigadier-general were at length successful, and he was duly installed in his easy and lucrative office. His efforts to please were incessant, and he lost no opportunity of ingratiating himself in the good opinions both of the colonists and the Home Government. His administration continued without interruption until the 26th July, 1815, when, at an extraordinary meeting of the Court of Policy, the lieutenant-governor informed the members that, in consequence of orders received from England to proceed to another part of the West Indies on official business, he would be obliged to leave the colony for a short time, during which period the administration of the government would be confided to the senior military officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Codd, who was introduced to the court, and took the usual oath of office.

This gentleman continued his services as acting lieutenant-governor until the 3rd October, when Brigadier-General Murray returned and resumed his duties.

Among the numerous parties emigrating from Europe to this colony a large proportion was from Scotland, for the most part of humble extraction, uneducated, and glad to accept of any opening that presented itself; they exemplified the well-known caution and parsimony of their

face, and, from the humblest, gradually rose to fill some of the highest situations. Possessing in a marked manner the shrewdness and tact necessary to personal aggrandisement, they may, as a class, be considered to have been the most successful of all the settlers in the country; and it is only where by mixture and association that their character became somewhat modified or deteriorated that they failed in any instance. Singularly enough, however, there is perhaps no class of European emigrants that has undergone such changes in their natural habits. The reserve, the temperance, the zeal for religion which characterised them in their own country, became gradually obliterated in their translation to this colony. They still associated together, and sustained each other in the true spirit of nationality, carrying this principle of cohesion indeed so far that the shrewd negroes applied the term of Scotchmen to the large shrimps which they were in the habit of hawking about for sale, because of the habits of these creatures in clinging one to the other. But, separated from the austere influence of domestic examples at home, and cast into a community very differently organised, they plunged as readily as others into the vortex of dissipation. In reference to a great many, it may be observed, that much of this change was owing to the fact of their being introduced on their arrival to a footing in society, and to a mode of living to which they had been previously strangers in "Auld Reekie." Mingling in more pretending and extravagant circles, and living in a style superior to that in which they had been brought up, they soon came to lose that simplicity and sobriety of character which, as a nation, they have so meritoriously maintained. They have been more successful in business notwithstanding than most of the other settlers from England or Ireland, but they have also encountered greater reverses, and, although forming a

majority of the white population, they have failed to impart their nationality to the colony.

In reference to the Scotch, it may not be out of place here to allude to an event which occurred about this period, and which at once illustrates the characteristic recklessness of the Gaelic race, and the abnormal condition of the society in which they now occupied so prominent a position.

When Herr Van Berchel was fiscaál of Demerara and Essequebo, he had occasion to prosecute some gentlemen from Berbice for illegal conduct; they failed to answer the summons for their appearance before the Court of Justice, and sentence of outlawry was pronounced against them. Determined to be revenged, several of these gentlemen (for such was their position in life) actually concocted a conspiracy to proceed to Georgetown, and to cut off the ears and nose of the unfortunate fiscaal. The plan was deeply laid, and very nearly succeeded. The conspirators, chiefly from Berbice, arrived in the river at night, and when everything was quiet, proceeded to the residence of their victim, who, with his family and servants, were asleep. The noise they made on entering the house fortunately awoke the inmates. The fiscaal, apprised of his danger, got out of his chamber, and when the conspirators entered his bed-room, they encountered only his wife. The lady was an excellent linguist, and understanding the language they spoke, listened in terror and astonishment to their words, but still, by the force of her presence of mind, preserved an appearance of composure. It is asserted by some, that the lady being of rather a masculine appearance, was at first taken for her husband, and rather rudely handled. They soon discovered their mistake, however, and finding that their prey had escaped, they were about to search the house, where they would assuredly have found their victim, who had

merely crept out of sight into a lobby, when the sound of a gun was heard. Supposing it for the morning gun, while, in fact, it proved to be the signal of the arrival of the monthly sailing-packet, they were seized with consternation, and fled. An alarm was immediately given by the servants to the military guard, for there were no police at this period; but no attempt was made to arrest the flight of the delinquents, for, as it afterwards appeared, the officer in command was a Scotchman, and evidently aware of the plot. The conspirators were thus allowed to make good their retreat; and, although a reward of 500*l.* was offered for their discovery, and other efforts were made to trace them, they found means to evade the ends of justice. The incident made a great sensation at the time, and shows us clearly the lawless state of things that prevailed at that period.

Among other advantages which the advent of the British brought to the colony, must be particularly mentioned the introduction of an increased number of European women. The Dutch had to encounter too many difficulties and dangers on their first arrival, to think of holding out any inducement to the female members of their families to join them in their new abodes. The inevitable consequence was the formation of illicit connexions between the settlers and the native and slave women, which led to a most anomalous and depraved state of society, and which was destined to entail much subsequent discontent on the social community. If, as Lord Bacon has it in his profound essays, "wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses," it must be apparent, that to seek such ties among the rude natives, or the uncivilised African slaves, was only to involve the children of such unions in degradation and misery. The Dutch, probably, had heard of the saying of one of the ancients, who, when

asked at what time a man should marry, replied, "A young man not yet, an older man not at all;" but it was perhaps as much from necessity as choice that coloured and black women became the mistresses of most of the old colonists, and many curious anecdotes are related of the companionships thus formed between them.

The arrival of European females was calculated to produce a gradual revolution in the tastes and habits of the community. It could not, however, be expected that the individual bred up in the coarser idea of a planter's life, could all at once burst the fetters that had bound him in his "family ties," or hail with the most refined emotions the approach of female purity. Inveterate habit, too, was not without some influence, and many of the colonists had become so much accustomed to the coarseness with which they had allied themselves, as to have lost their zest for more refined associations. The change, therefore, although sure and decisive in the end, was slow and gradual in its progress. By degrees, the open exhibition of vice was abandoned; a certain sort of sense of shame set in; the practice of pampering the passions of visitors and guests, which had been esteemed as one of the obligations of hospitality, fell into disuse; while the younger branches of the community, having now an opportunity of mixing in a society where their ideas and tastes would be improved and elevated, exhibited a desire to cultivate a species of domestic happiness unknown to their predecessors. The ceremony and condition of marriage began to exercise a salutary influence even over the lower classes, who, with their usual tendency to imitate the example of their superiors, soon fell into the new modes of civilised life, although at first they neither appreciated nor understood them. But that which was in the beginning mere imitation settled down at last into custom.

The introduction of white women, however, was not unaccompanied by some drawbacks. Their moral influence was obvious and considerable; but it brought the usual accessories of high civilisation in its train—jealousy, envy, and class prejudices. So soon as a distinct circle of white acquaintances was complete, it became an object with many amongst the coloured population to associate themselves with it; but, alas! for the imperfection of poor human nature! such an intercourse was found to be impracticable. "Chaste women" (says Bacon) "are often proud and forward, as presuming upon the merits of their chastity;" and gentle and virtuous as was the European female, she was yet tinged with prudery or vanity too deep to allow of her mixing with a colour and a class to which she considered herself superior. It is difficult to analyse the feelings which prompted this exclusive conduct. A variety of circumstances tended to keep alive such sentiments. A virtuous woman was certainly not to be blamed for refusing to associate with the lost or degraded of her sex; who would censure her for endeavouring to avoid as much as possible such contamination? or for showing her repugnance to such intercourse if accident happened to throw it in her way? No doubt there was much pride, contempt, and rudeness exhibited in the bearing of the superior towards the inferior; but how otherwise, in such a state of society, was bold-faced assumption or impudent intrusion to be met, especially when it appeared, as it frequently did, that the two parties were nearly on an equality in wealth and station? On the one hand there was purity of conduct with offended vanity; superiority of education with narrowness of mind; refinement of manners with bigotry and prudery. On the other there was licentious conduct with exalted

connexion; deficient knowledge with acquired manners; coarseness of conduct with worldly ambition. At first these antagonist elements of society were not brought much in contact, and in after times many of the points of their relative position were changed; but the feelings of jealousy still rankled in the heart. Although an improved education and more refined manners insensibly elevated the younger coloured females, it did not entitle them to the position in society they coveted, and were so often unjustly denied. The same prejudice as to colour also influenced the men, but never to the same degree, and in later times more stirring occupations and the necessity for closer intimacy in business dissipated all feelings of distinction.

The question of colour has been too much mixed up with that of class. In the early social state men were necessarily divided, as they are now, by their avocations and pursuits. It is no matter of surprise that, at first, the higher classes should be startled to see some of the members from the lower order raised, either by connexion or wealth, to a level with themselves; and the earlier the period at which this elevation took place, the greater the surprise and the more bitter the resistance. At length, however, it became apparent that the circumstances of society were undergoing an organic alteration, that whilst one class was sinking the other was rising, and that the time would come when they must meet. If the junction was more rapid than had been expected, or the collision was too sudden, it certainly did not tend to cast them apart again, or to fling them back to their original position. The contact caused each at first to recoil, but moral laws and adventitious circumstances again brought them together. Whilst, therefore, it seems hard to taunt the whites with unnecessary prudery and

pride in their communion with those of another class, it is also wrong to ascribe to the coloured race an unfitness, either by nature or education, to rank with the white.

Longe mihi alia mens est.

The superiority in intelligence, morality, and social position long remained with the white, and the prejudice against colour was chiefly removed by their own exertions. Many young men and women of colour were sent to Europe, and brought back again with an excellent education and polished manners, in the hope of meeting the reception to which their respectability entitled them. Their expectations were frequently frustrated, and disappointment and mortification were the only results of the effort to improve their condition. They found to their dismay that, in spite of high connexions, and the refinements they had acquired, they were still excluded from what was considered the "first society," and thus doomed to solitary seclusion, or to descend to inferior intercourse; it is not to be marvelled at that they should lose all the advantages they had gained, and relapse into their former degradation. Surrounded by temptations of all kinds, exposed to profligacy and to dissipation, they fell from their high vantage ground into the lowest and most immoral habits. Nor was this all. The very persons who had driven them into this condition were amongst the very first to reproach them with its consequences. There was nothing left to the coloured race but to vindicate their natural claims by the maintenance of their own self-respect in the observance of irreproachable morality in their conduct. And it is greatly to their honour that they lived down the obloquy and contempt which, in this period of transition, was so unworthily heaped upon them. Many instances occurred in which persons of colour of both sexes, by the mere weight and

force of their exemplary lives, intermarried with some of the most respectable inhabitants of British Guiana. The question of colour was not always to operate as a social ban.

> Quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses,
> O, formosus puer! nimium ne crede colori;
> Alba ligustra cadunt, Vaccinia nigra leguntur.

A new element sprang out of these unions. The children, born of parents who were themselves born in the colony, received the name of "creoles," and the term is applied indiscriminately to all children, whether white, coloured, or black. Europeans are apt to attach the idea of some particular colour to the word "creole." This is a vulgar error. The word creole (Spanish, criollo) is derived from the verb "criar," which, both in Spanish and Portuguese, signifies to breed, to create, or to produce; and is applied to native Americans, or, indeed, West Indians descended from "Old World" parents. In Portuguese especially, a creole is understood to be "Pessoa nascida nas Indias occidentaes"—a person born in the Western Indias, although singularly enough the Portuguese word "criola," is often Englishified—a home-born slave.*

The creole of European extraction is a compound of the nation of his parents, modified greatly by the climate in which he is born, and the habits of life in which he is educated. The intelligence he derives from his parents is quickened by local circumstances, and brought to maturity at an earlier period of life than in other countries. From his childhood he is accustomed to see himself surrounded by dependents or flatterers, with few persons to restrict his inclinations or to correct his judgment. Left to himself, without much stimulus to exertion, he wastes

* The following remarks are intended chiefly to apply to the creoles in times of slavery. It is to be hoped that the creoles of the present day have more rational views.

his energy in frivolous pursuits or empty pleasures, often approaching to dissipation. Under the impression that he is exclusive lord of the soil to which he is born, he awaits the approach of fortune without making any efforts to seek it. If sent to Europe to study at an early age, he is often placed with those who have not the same means at command; and whilst the European child feels he has to work for the future, the creole fancies he has nothing to do but to enjoy the pleasures of the world. Bearing with him from his native country the listlessness, languor, and indolence of his temperament, he never rouses himself sufficiently to compete with more energetic dispositions; hence he is invariably outstripped in the race of life. Estranged from his parents' fostering care at an early age, he becomes forgetful or heedless of their love. The master of an ideal universe, he lives and dwells upon the fantastical creations of his brain rather than encounter the stern realities of existence. His heart is cold toward his kindred, for he has been long separated from them; his patriotism is languid, because his native land equals not in splendour and luxury the nations he has visited; generous to a fault, he is unjust to himself; eager in temperament, he is incapable of exertion; impetuous in his impulses, he is deficient in perseverance; quick of intelligence, he is slow in judgment and reasoning; not wanting physical capability, he is lazy in mental and bodily applications; humble in pretension, he is proud in spirit. "Every indolent nation (says the author of the 'Esprit des Lois') is haughty, for those who do not work themselves consider themselves as the sovereign of those who are laborious." This philippic was applied to the Spaniards, but is not inapplicable to the creoles; their abilities qualify them for distinction, but their indolence prevents them from obtaining it; and when called back to his own country,

after an experience of European life, he becomes indifferent, supercilious, and extravagant, and has neither the will nor the energy to avert present evil or to secure future good.

The creoles, as a class, have done little towards changing in any way the social or moral condition of the colony. It is a remarkable fact that all the revolutions in taste and habits, in the moral as well as the intellectual circle, have been introduced by strangers from other countries. So far the mixture of races has effected some good; prejudices have worn off by mutual contact, and corresponding benefits have flowed in upon all classes.

CHAPTER X.

"THE GOLDEN AGE" OF THE COLONY—PROSPERITY OF PLANTERS—CONSIDERATIONS ON NEGRO SLAVERY—MORAL WANTS—WORKING OF MISSIONARIES, AND THE EFFECT ON THE SLAVES—FINAL ABOLITION OF SLAVE TRADE, 1814—FORMAL CESSION OF THESE COLONIES TO GREAT BRITAIN, 1814—SLAVE REGISTRATION ACT, 1816—DECLINE OF COTTON ESTATES—LIFE OF AN OVERSEER—MILITIA FORCE—ARRIVAL OF PRESIDENT ROUGH—UNJUST MONOPOLY OF OFFICES—DISPUTES ABOUT THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—SUSPENSION OF PRESIDENT ROUGH—ARRIVAL OF PRESIDENT WRAY, 1821—FEELINGS OF SLAVES ABOUT FREEDOM—MR. CANNING'S ACT, 1823; ITS EFFECT ON THE SLAVES—MISSIONARY SMITH—SECRET MEETINGS OF SLAVES—INSURRECTION, 1823—PLOT DISCLOSED—MEASURES TO SUPPRESS IT—PROCLAMATION OF MARTIAL LAW—ARMING OF THE SLAVES—ENCOUNTER WITH THE MILITARY—SUPPRESSION OF THE INSURRECTION—GENERAL COURT-MARTIAL; TRIAL, SENTENCE, AND EXECUTION OF THE PRISONERS—COURT-MARTIAL ON MISSIONARY SMITH; HIS CONDEMNATION AND DEATH—REFLECTIONS SUGGESTED BY THESE EVENTS.

THE influx of European settlers, and the occasional importation of African labourers, together with the introduction of British capital and improved machinery in the working of estates, soon led to great improvements. If we consider the wealth which could at this period be readily amassed (the amount of capital invested in the cultivation of cotton, coffee, and sugar, being commonly doubled in ten years, and often in five), the luxuries, and high style of living among the planters, the gaieties of the higher classes, and the contentment and general well-doing of the lower, this era may be regarded as the

commencement of the golden age of the colony, which, whilst it was to last for some years, eventually led to a great revolution in manners, sentiments, and position. But whilst the horn of plenty was full, whilst the heart was satisfied with its present gratification, those very steps were commenced which afterwards led to misfortune. The mind, slumbering in its dream of happiness, was not fortifying itself against those revolutions which time was sure to bring. The lull of security concealed a new and unexpected danger.

Tired, perhaps, of the monotony of acquiring wealth on such easy terms, the proprietors of estates now for the first time betrayed a desire to launch into a wider sphere; and, leaving their properties in the hands of agents, many of them retired from colonial life to live in European circles, and vie with the artistocracy of England. The agents or attorneys, also called Q. Q.'s, upon whom the management of their properties devolved, were allowed liberal salaries to superintend the working of the several plantations, and to forward the produce to their employers, or to the merchants in England. This was a proceeding fraught with indefinite evil. It was reasonable that large capitalists, mercantile houses, or companies, investing money in West India property, should have their agents on the spot to negotiate their business. It was also excusable that parties who had already acquired immense wealth, and who really were unable to spend their incomes in such a limited community, should return to their native shores; but the fascinating example was followed by numbers whose positions in life were not so independent, and who, by establishing a system of living far beyond what was warranted either by present prosperity or future prospects, soon laid the foundation of inevitable ruin to themselves and families. The principle of absenteeism, so injurious

to most countries, was practised on a small scale in the West, and involved the owners of property in all the horrors of debt, mortgages, law-suits, and poverty.

The colonist rejected the name of settler; he aspired to the title of proprietor; the profitable revenue of his estate was calculated by him to last for a life of luxury and splendour in Europe, and to be transmitted in perpetuity to his children unchanged and unimpaired. It is true that the remarkable changes of the future could not then have been predicted; but the discussion of questions of vital importance to the West Indies had already began; and, although the change was far off, it might even then have been anticipated.

Moreover, the mind of the slave was undergoing gradual alteration; his condition, looked upon in a physical sense, was far from bad; nay, it was enviable compared with that of the peasant in many countries. In health he had food, raiment, protection from the weather, with days of relaxation and amusement. In illness he was tended with care and kindness. Old age was not dreaded, but awaited without anxiety; when unable any longer to work, he was humanely provided for, and he quitted his earthly career full of years, and without one care in his heart concerning those he left behind. The following is a testimonial in favour of their condition by a visitor to that country about this period:—"As we passed up the river (the Demerara), we landed at several of the small plantations, and purchased plantains. The people were cheerful and happy. In my opinion they had good cause; for they were, indeed, the children of ease and plenty."

Again, another writer of a later date, speaking of their general condition, stated:—"They have comfortable houses, raise as much feathered stock as they like, have their nets to catch fish, and as much ground as they choose to till; they have also often a day, or half a day,

given them to cultivate yams, cassava, arrowroot, &c., for their own use and disposal, besides their allowance of food weekly.

"The working people are not generally sent to work till half-past six in the morning, in which case they get their breakfast before they go, and come home at twelve. After remaining an hour and a half they go out again, and come home in the evening about six o'clock. Sometimes they go out earlier, and have more time in the middle of the day: in the time of crop the most able people are divided into spells to do the work about the buildings, in order that it may not come to their turns more than twice or thrice a week; nightwork is as much avoided as possible, and the women favoured in every way, particularly those with children. I have always thought, and still do think, that the negroes are far better off than our labouring class at home, as they are provided for in every way as long as they live; they are never prevented from going to see their friends from one estate to another on Sundays, or during the week after work is done. Every working negro receives 2 lbs. of good salt fish, the head persons 4 lbs., and the children 1 lb. a week; when this cannot be obtained, pork, beef, herrings, or other things in proportion. Upon those estates where there were plantains the proprietors have generally allowed them to use as many as they require, and where they would not grow in sufficient quantity, they have been purchased, as they prefer them to any other vegetable: the head people got two glasses of rum a day, and the rest of the gang generally one, and in bad weather, in crop time, sometimes two. Salt, pipes, tobacco occasionally, and extra allowances at the holidays, namely, at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. On these occasions they amuse themselves in any way they like without restraint. The working people get a complete suit of clothes annually, and double

allowance to the head men. Linen, checks, osnaburgs, salempores, needles and thread to the whole, with a blanket to each every second year, and occasionally knives, razors, scissors, looking-glasses, iron pots and fish-hooks to the grown people.

"The quantity of labour required from one able man on a sugar estate is to hole or bank for canes across from forty to forty-five roods, to weed canes about one-sixth of an acre; in digging out drains in canes, coffee, and cotton about twenty-five roods, say two feet wide, and one shovel deep; new navigable or draining trenches a rood square of about two feet depth; in digging old ones it is regulated by the state they are in. Weeding coffee one-eighth of an acre, and cotton about the same. Weeding plantains one quarter of an acre, but it depends upon the heaviness of the grass; in fact, these things are regulated by a person's judgment more than by any particular rule; at any rate, I am sure a labourer at home would do more than any two of them that I have ever seen. There is always a medical man employed to attend the sick on every estate, who resides as near the centre of his practice as he can, and visits the hospital every second day, or oftener if necessary; whatever he orders, either as medicine or nourishment, is given to the patients, such as wine, porter, beer, bread, flour, rice, sago, fowl, &c.

"They have a comfortable hospital, rooms divided with beds and bedding, and careful nurses to attend and take care of them. The head overseer goes with the doctor to the hospital to see his prescriptions attended to, and I have known, where cases required it, of another, and sometimes two, medical men being called in, besides the one practising for the estate."

The moral condition of the slave was, however, but imperfectly watched over. The missionaries alone at-

tended to the religious wants of the negroes, although much opposed and objected to by the planters; indeed, an antipathy always existed between the latter and the former. A planter writing of the labours of this sect of Christians, observes, "Some attended the missionary chapels, which I never prevented, though I never had any good opinion as to their doctrine, but have observed that they did not teach them anything to their advantage, for they did not behave so well afterwards as they did before." It has been already shown that ever since the introduction of the London missionaries, in 1808, there had existed feelings of antagonism between them and the inhabitants in general. They were regarded, however unjustly, by the latter as spies upon their conduct, as the paid emissaries of a class in England opposed in principle to the system of forced labour in the West Indies. Their reception by the planter was cold and formal; their association with the negro was hailed by them with the most cordial and enthusiastic attachment. And no wonder, it was the first instance of the white man mixing on terms of equality and cordiality with the negro slave—the first example of the educated European holding out the hand of fellowship to the ignorant and uncivilised son of Africa.

The condition of the slave, however improved in physical and temporal advantages, was yet notoriously neglected in a moral and religious point of view. So thought the missionaries, and in accordance with such convictions they preached. The shout of liberty resounding from other and far-distant shores had reached their ears, and stimulated by its alluring voice, they took upon themselves to prepare the way for the contemplated changes in the negro race. Estimable as was their character, virtuous as were their intentions, it cannot be denied that their conduct was deficient in judgment and pru-

dence. Carried away by the enthusiasm and holiness of their cause, they grasped too suddenly at the prize, and without the patience or the perseverance to prepare the mind and heart of the slave for the boon of freedom, they offered it abruptly to the feelings and passions of uncivilised men. They awakened the slave to a sense of his degraded position in the scale of mankind. They inculcated doctrines of equality and liberty at variance with the laws in existence, and opposed to the spirit of authority then so predominant. They could not preach the doctrine of Christ crucified to men whose hearts were branded with the stamp of slavery without uttering anathemas against its injustice and inhumanity. They presented the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil to ever curious man, and persuaded him to taste, eat, and live.

Not indeed suddenly, but by degrees, did the negro dare to entertain such flattering views of future happiness. Slavery began gradually to be felt as a wrong and an opprobium, a yoke too hard to be borne patiently; but such ideas had not emanated wholly from the suffering—they had been suggested to and excited in him by a class superior to himself. The state of freedom, far from being properly understood and faithfully represented, was regarded wholly as a state of happiness. Habits of industry were not inculcated as necessary to its fulfilment. Its obligations, its duties, its intentions were overlooked. The transition was too startling; the object too brilliant to be patiently or gradually waited for. Hence arose in the minds of the slaves faint and imperfect notions of emancipation; crude and ill-digested notions of freedom. Like to a man who has been long following a humble pursuit, and who has suddenly presented to him an unexpected field of ambition, he soon loses all taste for his former homely avocations, and pur-

sues with eagerness and without discretion the new object so temptingly held out to him. His former toil is no longer supportable, his ideas are unsettled, his arm is ready to seize what his heart desires, and passive submission ceases to be possible. So felt the negro slave, and however unwarranted his bearing or opinions, however mistaken his object, we should make every allowance for the frailty of human nature and the working of human passions. The spark was kindled which was in a few years to break out into the flame of open rebellion, and however unwilling we may be to ascribe it to any one particular cause, there cannot now remain a doubt that the breath of European eloquence first fanned that spark into flame, and added fuel to its fury.

But how was the white man and the master employed at the time when this change was being wrought on his dependent? The British, in mixing freely with the older Dutch colonists, and entering into their views of cultivation, had also adopted many of their habits, hence the practice of the generality was guided by the example set them by others. Habits of early rising were acquired, and the freshness of the morning air, qualified by a dram either of gin or brandy, a system of luxurious and dissipated living was pursued, and a night of carousing often followed. The night of hospitality and conviviality continued, perhaps a little modified by the presence of European women. The haughty domineering manner exercised over their dependents of all classes by the Dutch was, if not fully adopted by the British, certainly not discountenanced by them! With the former, it had been always a rule as well as a practice never to allow of any familiarity between the white man and the negro. The probabilities of such an intercourse leading (according to the well-known proverb) to contempt was evidently uppermost in the mind of the master. A curious instance of this homely adage occurred once in a dispute

which took place between an imperious planter and a cannie Scotchman, his dependent. There had never existed any cordial feeling between the two parties, and upon the subject of their difference the planter, forgetting his dignity in his passion, made use of some very hard names, which the dependent patiently bore. At last some cutting invective roused the Scotchman, who, putting himself in an attitude of independence, and recalling to a confused memory the little learning of bygone years, exclaimed, by way of learned rebuke, "Tut, gude man! tut! ye dinna ken that too much familiarity breeds despise."

The prudent and methodical Dutchman, too proud to be familiar, and too serious to "make fun" with his slave, was surrounded by a halo of colonial etiquette that at once enhanced his own importance and subdued the spirit of others. The stiffness and inflexible gravity of his deportment have been chilling to the warm impulse of the African negro, and hence the most servile attention was proffered by the latter and accepted as a matter of course by the sedate Hollander. Such expressions as "Me kiss you bottom foot;" "Oh for a mighty massa no do so to a-'wee," indicate the abject feelings impressed upon the slave in earlier times; but when the English came it was a matter of surprise, if not alarm, to the Dutchman to witness the condescension and often humorous confidence established between the owner and his slave, and the one, naturally inclined by his temperament to receive the advances of the servant, was checked by the example and, no doubt, political conduct of the other. The Dutch, however, no longer the only possessors of the soil, were gradually yielding to the force of circumstances, and the habits and situations of authority so long belonging to the privileged class, were likewise interfered with by the British Government.

An English lawyer, his Honour Jabez Henry, arrived

from England to fill the appointment of president of the courts of justice, and from this circumstance may be dated the first amalgamation of anything like the English laws upon the old Dutch or Roman code, which, however, long continued to be the prevailing legal authority in this colony. In May of the same year, also, was completed the final abolition of the slave trade, another circumstance fraught with the most important consequence to the community. The following year (1814), by an additional article to a convention between Great Britain and the Netherlands, signed at London on the 13th August, Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice were ceded to Great Britain, but on condition that the Dutch proprietors should have liberty, under certain regulations, to trade with Holland. Thus gradually were being relinquished all pretension on the part of that nation any longer to the right and power to exercise a moral, political, or social influence over a land converted by them from a swampy marsh into a cultivated and rich district, and over a people transplanted by them from the land of Africa, to receive civilisation and liberty, if not for themselves, yet for their children. The industry of centuries on their part, the institution of years, the habits and manners so long stamped upon society by the enterprising Hollander, were to be given up for ever to the different policy of another country, foreign in temperament and in manners. A series of British governors had an important effect upon the various classes of society, and certainly greatly contributed to their advancement and progress. But however much the colony has risen in the scale of civilisation, it cannot be denied that, with the supremacy of Dutch power and authority, passed away many solid and substantial advantages. It is no idle compliment to the old Dutch colonists to remark, that much of the future prosperity of the colony arose from the foundations which they had laid with so much energy, perseverance, and skill.

To their untiring zeal and indomitable industry we owe the existence of the present plantations; and it is a question whether, since the arrival of the British, the colony generally has ever presented the same thriving and prosperous appearance that it did in the time of the calumniated Dutch.

The following table shows the fixed salaries for the service of the year 1815:

TABLE showing the Fixed Salaries for the Year 1815 paid by the Colony.

	Guilders.		Guilders.
Lieu.-gov. (part of his salary)	26,000	Brought forward . .	188,478
His honour the president .	15,000	Assistant-salary to assistant-postholder	550
First fiscal	27,000	Pensions	12,300
Second ditto	15,000		
The drossard	3,700		
The scout	3,000	TABLE-MONEY.	
The gaoler	2,000	Major-general	12,000
The seven dienaars, 1300 guilders each	9,100	Officers of 60th Regiment .	14,000
The gaol surgeon	3,600	Engineer, ordinance, and artillery	3,000
Colonial sexton	2,500	Commissary ditto	600
Translator	2,200	Barrack-master	600
Keeper of archives of Essequebo	2,200	Hospital staff	1,200
Financial accountant . . .	5,000	Brigade chaplain	600
Recorder orphan chamber .	6,000	Clergymen	5,000
Clerk to ditto	3,000	Navy	3,000
Adjutant-general	8,000	Aide-de-camp	600
Two town overseers, 1500 guilders each	3,000	Extraordinary expenses . .	25,000
Bookbinder	2,200	Colony house expenses . .	20,000
Armourer	4,400	Expense of roads	11,000
Inspector-general	5,000	Expenses of justice	25,000
Colony house-keeper . . .	3,300	Repairs of public buildings .	12,000
Colony surgeon	3,000	Presents to Indians	25,000
Assistant ditto	600	Colony hospital	4,000
Three postholders, 2200 guilders each	6,600	Printing expenses	3,000
Two assistants	528	Beacon ditto	3,000
Postholder Morocco and assistant	3,200	Repairs, public bridges . .	3,000
Inspector of beacon . . .	2,000	Militia expenses	2,500
Overseer	800	Poor chest	10,000
The missionary	2,200	Receivers' commission . .	25,000
Colony agents in London, 800*l.* Exchange, 12 guilders to the 1*l.* each	9,600	Sums remitted to trustees for investments in the funds .	24,000
Master of mail-boat . . .	4,000	Expenses of mail-boat . . .	5,000
Manager of workhouse . .	2,000	Salaries to Dutch clergymen .	3,800
The clock-maker	550		443,228
Superintendent of pilots . .	2,200	Barrack at Capocy	29,000
		Annuity to Mrs. Robertson .	3,000
		Loan to assist projected canal	11,000
		Extraordinary repairs, public buildings	8,000
		Costs of new despatch boat .	19,200
Carried forward . .	188,478		513,428

In Berbice several officers and civilians successively filled the separate appointment of governors of that colony, a short notice of which occurs elsewhere. The influence exercised by such gentlemen was of an important nature: the tone of society was improved; the formality and punctiliousness of former times was exchanged for the usefulness and practical exhibition of English authority, not enveloped in unmeaning *hauteur*, or obscured by official etiquette, but showing itself in practical measures and social advantages. Through them, also, the government ascertained accurately the state of the colony, its true position, its wants, as well as its capabilities; and through their instrumentality was brought about, gradually, such measures of policy as seemed necessary to the ultimate object in view with reference to the colonies. It is very true that, on the other hand, a one-sided view was also taken of the actual condition of the new settlement; it is very true that official pride and self-sufficiency may have often given a representation of things not very flattering to the inhabitants—possibly not even just—and that in the eagerness of command and desire of approval, the one class on whose side already, having the sympathy of the British nation, were drawn in vivid colours, whilst the other, opposed in England by the "Vox Populi," if not the "Vox Dei," was sketched out in gloomy and sombre outline.

One of the first steps taken by the governors was to inquire particularly into the numbers and condition of the slaves; an act for the registration of slaves was passed in 1816, and in the following year a return was made of the inhabitants generally* throughout these settlements.

* This act, on the recommendation of Earl Bathurst, was subsequently amended on the 19th of August, 1818, and the new act was published the fol-

In Demerara and Essequebo there were, at this time, 77,163 slaves; in Berbice 24,549; total 101,712. The free population amounted to about 8000 persons (including the whites); total 110,000. In the following year (1817) there was an appraisement and census taken of Georgetown, but from this period the number of slaves gradually decreased, notwithstanding considerable annual importations. The two colonies with such a labouring population were decidedly more flourishing than they have ever been since; for out of such a number of slaves much forced labour was extracted.

A change came over the agricultural prospects of the country about this period. It has been seen that a large majority of the estates were in cotton cultivation, which had long yielded a splendid profit. The author of the "History of the West Indies" makes out an annual profit of fourteen per cent.; but it was probably more than that. The great and increasing demand for such a useful article in Europe led others also to attempt its culture on a large scale. Among the most successful in this endeavour was the United States of America, who rapidly filled the markets, and greatly undersold the West Indians (the colonists in this colony included); a revolution in agricultural affairs was the consequence. Some of the cotton properties were converted into sugar estates; others were converted into cattle farms. British capitalists soon found a profitable investment of money in the manufacture of sugar, which was gradually to supersede the growth of the other. The gold then rapidly poured through this channel to the west soon repaid the activity and enterprise of speculators. Another sure road to fortune seemed to be discovered. The goddess of wealth still smiled upon the planter, increased commercial inter-

lowing October. In the year 1817 the salary of the registrar appointed by the governor was fixed by the Combined Court at 200*l.* per annum.

course ensued, and everything went gaily as a "marriage bell." The spirit of gain, urging on man to penetrate into these long desolate regions, was also unwittingly leading him to be the means of civilising a land of such promise and grandeur.

Whilst luxury and comfort, however, abounded among the owners or representatives of property, the young man who was yet on the first step of the ladder had a weary and troublesome ascent before him. Quitting a home of civilisation, perhaps of comfort, he commenced life in this country as an overseer; that is a kind of superintendent of the allotted work of the slaves. He arose at dawn of day, and followed his gang of labourers to their place of toil, far away in the back lands, on the verge of untrodden forests; exposed to the burning sun or tempestuous rain, he remained for hours in the open air, encouraging the active, stimulating the lazy, and subduing the refractory. His arm of power was the whip, either plied by himself or by a headman. The deep drain had to be dug, the luxuriant soil tilled, the rich cane planted, or cut down. Worn out with fatigue, he returned at a late hour to recruit exhausted nature, and throw himself into his hammock or cot. It is no wonder that the monotony of the day's occupation was too often varied by the excitement of a night's carousal, which, often renewed, laid the seeds of future disease, or hurried him to an untimely grave. The house of the manager was his only society, and here he was oftener treated as an outcast than as a friend or equal. His few friends were his brother overseers on the same or neighbouring plantations. Isolated from the means of improvement, and gradually becoming indifferent to its pleasures, he abandoned them for the grosser ones of sense. The Sundays often afforded no day of repose; he was expected to copy estates' books, or was otherwise em-

ployed in writing, and in inspecting, by way of amusement, the plantain walks or provision grounds; when, by degrees, however, a better class of persons arrived to fill such situations, considerable improvement was manifested. The habits acquired in such a school became permanent with many. Growing up to fill the rolls of managers, attorneys, and proprietors, they still carried the practice of dissipation along with them. Excessive drinking was not regarded as a vice or as prejudicial to health, but rather as a proof of thorough colonisation. It would have been considered the height of rudeness and indecorum to call upon a friend and not to join him in his brandy and water, or "sangaree." No matter what the hour, or what the number of visitors, every man's health was to be drank. It was, perhaps, owing to some such excitement that the habit of duelling became so prevalent at one epoch in this country; a look, a word, a laugh, often led to a bitter quarrel, which was only to be decided by the law of the pistol. Parties have been even known to "turn out," as it is termed, whilst in a state of intoxication, and only to awaken from their madness to find themselves hastening unto death. It is possible that something of a military spirit also led to this, for, humble and domestic as were the duties of a planter or a merchant, yet the fact of being incorporated as "militia" may have led men to assume some, at least, of the propensities of Mars and "horrida bella." It has been seen that from an early period the necessity of a militia force had been felt, besides the presence of a regular military corps, to oppose by their discipline any attempt at internal insubordination on the part of the slaves; and the same precautionary principle established by the Dutch was likewise enforced by the British as early as the year 1799,* when all free persons from the

* Formerly the colony was divided into burgher divisions, each having a

age of sixteen to fifty-five or sixty were liable to be enrolled in one or other corps of militia.

The militia force was instituted in consequence of some rumours about a threatened attack on the colony, and certain differences arose between members of the Court of Policy on this subject. Exceptions were made in favour of members of the Courts of Policy and Justice, fiscals, and other police officers, keizers, and financial representatives, colonial, government, and president's secretaries, the receiver of the king's and colonial taxes, book-keeper-general, the registrar of slaves, harbour-master, and naval officer, the officers of his Majesty's customs, persons in holy orders, practising physicians and surgeons, except as surgeons or assistant-surgeons to the militia, vendue-master and postmaster. Of the utility of such a body of regularly armed and disciplined men, there can be no question at the time, especially when they were raised and kept in something like military subordination; and a convincing proof of this will soon be brought forward. The number and composition of the militia force varied, of course, at different periods. It comprised generally a company of artillery, a troop or more of cavalry, a rifle corps, light infantry and several ordinary companies, each commanded by its proper officers, together with a commander-in-chief, aide-de-camps, adjutants; in fact, a regular staff. For the regulation and guidance of such a heterogeneous mass of planters, professionals, and tradesmen, a number of articles or rules were drawn up or enacted by the lieutenant-governor and council in each colony, subject, of course, to future amendments, or new clauses. By such militia regulations were established, among other things, the number of regiments and battalions, corps, &c., the

separate corps, with flags of a distinguishing colour, as red, blue, &c.; but in 1799 these were organised into a militia force under the British commander.

number of companies in each, and geographical division of the same; the right of the governor to appoint all officers, together with their rank and number; that every estate should furnish a proportion of men fit for militia duty; the formation of a medical board to examine persons claiming exemption. Persons otherwise exempted to make oath; the finding of arms and accoutrements; estates to find means of conveyance for their servants, and to be provided with arms, according to the number of whites, or free coloured persons thereon; the time for assembling; persons going to, or returning from militia service, not liable to arrests; nature of active service; mode of alarms, and how to be communicated; armed expedition forbidden, unless by permission of the governor; quarterly returns, how to be made; militia officers bound to assist the civil power; also to maintain the peace, and to take cognisance of any criminal act done within their division; punishment of sedition or disturbance, or misconduct; penalty of *sending challenges to fight duels;* punishment for non-attendance at parades; penalty for not obeying superior officers; or not appearing at parades properly armed, clothed, or accoutred; or for quitting parades without leave, &c.; regimental courts-martial; general courts-martial; oaths and other rules concerning these; collection and appropriation of fines; modes of appeal and redress; oaths of officers, &c. &c.

In connexion with the militia, fire companies were also formed, and the whole force in the neighbourhood was expected to appear on duty.

In Berbice similar regulations existed since 1817; all white and free coloured male inhabitants from the age of 16 to 60, residing in the colony and capable of bearing arms, were liable to serve in the militia, such exception being made as above-mentioned, &c.

The hardships of such a body were often severely felt by individuals; as, besides the expense of dress and loss of time, they were made frequently to endure severe exercise in the hot sun; and in some years had actually, in consequence of the scarcity or sickness of the troops, to perform the duty of guarding the town.

The "night duty" was especially irksome; and, in the year 1818, a petition of the inhabitants was sent to the authorities, praying to be relieved of such a baneful task.

The object, however, being for the general good, the establishment of such a force was long continued, and only done away with by proclamation on the 22nd of January, 1839, in obedience to an order from England, dated the 29th of November, 1838; and when the necessity for its continuance was, happily, no longer required.* During the period of its duration, the service of the militia was not often practically tested; but upon some occasions, and one more especially to which we are rapidly hastening, the exertions of such a body were of the most eminent service. As all classes of free persons were called upon to serve, it formed, as may be supposed, a rare assemblage of sizes, colours, ages, and figures; from the youthful clerk, decked out in gaudy uniform, to the more potent captain, privileged with the additional ardour of a horse; from the dark mulatto to the pale-faced aide-de-camp, prancing in spurs, and plumed cocked hat. It was an amusing sight to see them march.

* In the year 1817, the governor read a despatch received from Earl Bathurst urging the necessity of the colony maintaining its own troops, in consequence of embarrassments "at home." The motion to grant the necessary sum was negatived in the Court of Policy, but it was agreed that an allowance of money should be granted to maintain 200 white troops above the number usually allotted to the colony. At a meeting of the Combined Court, held on the 30th January, this motion was objected to by some of the financial representatives, but was carried, four of the members entering their protest. In the following year (1818), the Combined Court offered to maintain 300 regular soldiers, provided that 500 more were sent out and supported by the British Government, but in the following year (1819) they stipulated for 800 men instead of 500.

A profusion of perfume and perspiration filled the air; and undulating lines in height, and width, and depth, marked their serpentine courses. There was the burly *Falstaff*, and the meagre *Slender*—all Shakspeare's men, in fact, turned loose, or disguised in various uniforms. It was a pity our immortal bard never witnessed them; he would have written another volume of immortal plays. Another *Falstaff* would have exclaimed:—"If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused garnet. I have misused the king's press d——bly. I pressed me none but such toasts and butter, with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins' heads: and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves (oh, no!) as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. I'll not march thro' Coventry with them, that's flat—and the villains march wide between the legs, as if they had gyves on. Tut, tut: good enough to toss; food for powder, food for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better; tush, man; mortal man, mortal man."

It has been asserted, that upon more than one occasion, many a grudge has been paid off by the instrumentality of the militia, and a merchant, armed with a "little brief authority," has squared an account which in the counting-house was more difficult to settle. Private pique and private jealousy have been attributed to influence more than one subaltern of the motley army, and a commissioned officer, or one in a position to command, often exercised his tongue in the way of abuse to an inferior, which, out of the stern discipline of the force, would perhaps not have been attempted. If one had the leisure or inclination to dwell on the "campaign of the militia," many an amusing and interesting tale would be divulged. It is really surprising that no wit from the

ranks ever fired a squib in commemoration of the "days when we went soldiering, a long time ago." It is not improbable, as before remarked, that it was in fact owing to the introduction of something like a military feeling among the inhabitants the habit of "duelling" came into vogue, although distinctly prohibited in the militia regulations. Whether it is by coincidence or accident, it is remarkable that since the abolishment of such a force there has been a gradual decline of hostile meetings, although the white population has kept increasing, and the causes of quarrel may be presumed to be as frequent now as in time gone by. Again, by analogy we are led to remark that in those countries where a national guard or "landwehr" exists, there is a greater disposition to the settling of disputes by duel, than in other countries, as in England, where no such military organisation obtains.

However, be it as it may, there are too many melancholy instances on record in this colony of the frequency and fatality of such meetings among the earlier inhabitants for the present race not to rejoice at the extinction of such rude justice, one of the relics of the dark or middle ages, when the dispensation of Providence was set aside, and men, not satisfied with human or divine justice, left to chance what could not be decided by reason. "Revenge," says Bacon, "is a kind of wild justice, which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out; for as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law, but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office," &c.

It is singular, however, with what callousness and what indifference the majority of the inhabitants witnessed the sudden termination of life under any circumstances. "Men have been said to fear death as children fear to go in the dark;" but possibly the fact of seeing

so many "thus venture in the dark" lessens gradually the dread of, or the impression made by, it. The suddenness of disease in the colony, the rapidity of its fatal course, the uncertainty of its attack or termination, seemed to render men accustomed to its severe empire and hardened to its inexorable laws. Among the few epidemics which swelled the harvest of the grave, the yellow fever was perhaps the most fatal. It is not intended in this place to enlarge upon this or any other disease peculiar to the colony; the subject is introduced here as indicative of the listlessness and apathetic feeling which pervaded society in matters of life and death, and to note that when a severe visitation of that dreadful plague of the west was experienced in the year 1819,* the circle of gaiety and dissipation, though frequently interrupted by the breaking off of one of its human links, was never broken. Death, whilst it lessened the chain of human friendships and narrowed the circle, failed to impress upon the minds of survivors the necessity for either precautionary measures or more prudent living. Whilst a few believed that temperance tended to diminish risk, there were others who insisted that a free course of living was the only chance of escape; and, judging by the results, it is still uncertain which side has the greatest claim to victory. Friends in the closest bonds were torn asunder, and implacable enemies were unexpectedly laid side by side in quiet rest. Robust health ended in a speedy death, and the lips which, at the commencement of a week, had ejaculated "poor fellow" to the memory of some parted comrade, were mute and motionless at its close. The Dutch had a habit of sending round funeral letters to the acquaintances of a deceased individual.

* The population of Georgetown, October, 1819, was 10,519, viz., whites, 4683; free coloured, 2756; slaves, 6080; exclusive of Lacy-town and other suburbs not incorporated.

These printed circulars, edged in black, and headed "Memento Mori," were called by them "Doed Briefen," and the custom obtains to this very time.

But the tide of human affairs swept on; fresh hopes and fresh desires chased from the mind of society the temporary gloom which such events could not but inspire, however transiently. The growing interest of the colony,* and its increasing importance, however furthered by British authority, were yet fettered by many objectionable observances. From the year 1818 to 1821 the administration of the laws and of justice were felt peculiarly oppressive. The arrival from England, in 1816, of a new president to the courts of justice did not improve matters. The name of the new incumbent was W. H. Rough, who soon embroiled himself in local troubles. Unpossessed of much learning or natural ability, he appears to have negligently or inefficiently discharged his duties. At first his quarrels with some of the inhabitants rendered him only obnoxious to individuals; but, by degrees, he was so violently assailed in the newspaper, and had so completely forfeited the countenance and good opinion of Governor Murray, that he considered himself bound to address a memorial or petition to the king's most excellent majesty against certain grievances at the hands of the "commonalty" of the Court of Policy, and of the governor himself, who, in fact, had suspended the president from his official duties, and which resulted in a temporary stoppage of criminal law proceedings. By a strange coincidence it appears that in Berbice, like-

* In the year 1818 a colonial agent, W. Holmes, Esq., with whom A. Gordon, Esq., was associated to act, was appointed to look after the interests of the colony in England. The Court of Policy recommended a salary of 400*l.* per annum; but at a meeting of the Combined Court, held on the 27th of January, 1819, the financial representatives objected both to the appointment, the grant of money, and to the system of purchasing influence for the colony. At the same meeting they also objected to the support of missionary preachers, but agreed to support a regular clergy. They were, however, outvoted on both points.

wise, the president of the same court had also been suspended by the then governor, and looking at many features of the political state of society, it is not to be wondered at that the public mind was greatly excited. The inhabitants justly complained of the unlawful extortion of official fees, of the monopoly of so many district situations in the hands of a few individuals. Thus the situations of receiver of colonial duties on wines and spirits, acting comptroller, acting deputy postmaster-general, waiter and searcher of customs, were combined in one individual, who subsequently had them all taken from him by the governor, and given to a near relative of that officer, and to one who already filled the important offices of government secretary and private secretary, making altogether about fifteen situations actually held by one individual.

Many of these situations, it must be remembered, were clearly incompatable the one with the other, yet were they officially held by one lucky man. Disputes and much angry feeling became common to society. The exactors of the disputed fees received every assistance from his honour, William Rough, the then head of the judiciary, and to appease matters it became necessary, on the part of the governor, to publish a tariff of judicial, secretarial, and marshal's fees; but the public, once roused, are not easily satisfied:

Salus populi suprema lex.

A public meeting of the inhabitants was held relative to judicial and other abuses, and a petition to the king was framed and forwarded in 1821, founded on the resolutions of the meeting, praying his majesty to take into consideration the deplorable state of the administration of justice, and to order an inquiry into all fees of offices connected with the administration of justice, and the

establishment of reasonable and moderate tariffs, &c. To illustrate the feelings and the state of society, it may, perhaps, be allowed to introduce a little personal history into our narrative, which is as amusing as it is characteristic of the period. A certain gentleman,* holding a number of appointments, was suspected, perhaps unjustly, of a defalcation in his accounts, and of general impropriety in the management of his official duties. Upon such a suspicion "a mandament de facto" was issued by the President Rough, and the marshal of the court, under that authority, aided by police officers, with a scout and six dienaars, or inferior officers of justice, all armed with cutlasses, and accompanied by a negro blacksmith bearing a sledge-hammer, proceeded to the house of the suspected officer, forced and broke it open, seized his person, and conveyed him to the colony gaol, where he was detained with felons and runaway slaves for about 130 days. At the same time all his papers, moneys, books, &c., were carried away and never returned.

The same gentleman, when afterwards liberated, underwent a very narrow escape of again being taken prisoner, and his account of it is too naïve to be suppressed: "It appears that the failure of this (a previous) stratagem to arrest Mr. Ross only made his opponents more determined to effect their purpose at all hazards, for, having three days afterwards discovered the house where Mr. Ross was engaged to dine, a marshal was provided, with an additional warrant in the name of the sovereign, authorising him to break open the doors if he should meet with any resistance or obstruction. A troop of dienaars, soldiers in disguise, and other attendants, about thirty in number, were put under his order, for the double purpose of seeing that *he did his duty with-*

* This gentleman, Mr. Ross, receiver of colonial wine and spirit duties, and transient traders' tax, was dismissed by the governor in October, 1819.

out bribery or corruption, and to assist him, if necessary, in the execution of it; and about nine o'clock at night the house in question was accordingly surrounded. Mr. Ross having by the moonlight observed their approach, and suspecting the cause, arose from the dining-table, and retired to an adjoining room, where he could hear whatever passed. The marshal speedily entered, and displayed his above-mentioned warrants, the one under the sign-manual of his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, 'in the king's name,' and the other under that of his Honour the President of the Court of Justice, to take the body of G. Ross, declaring at the same time that had he not found ready admittance he would have been *justified* in breaking open that or any other house where his prisoner was to be found, and to search them, if he chose, for that purpose. Mr. Ross, hearing all this from his place of retreat, within a few feet of the *enemy*, would willingly have sold his chance of liberty for the next twelve months at a very cheap rate indeed, but, *fortunately* for him, it so happened that his host had just before gone out to make a call in the neighbourhood, and had left a *friend* in his *chair* to do the *honours* of the house. This visitor, with great presence of mind, and with an emphasis that did due justice to the host, *rose* and *answered* the marshal upon his honour as a gentleman that Mr. Ross was *not in his house*, adding that he might search if he pleased, but hoped his honour would not be disputed. The marshal *candidly* informed the company that he was watched, and that he must *do his* duty, but at the same time, if the gentleman (at the head of the table) would pass his word of honour that Mr. Ross was not in *his* house, he could not of course doubt the honour of a man of his respectability, and would be satisfied without giving any further trouble. The assertion being most solemnly repeated with great feeling

(and also with great truth), the marshal, with a politeness and graciousness which would have done honour to his employer, declared himself satisfied that the defendant was not there, and, *taking a glass of wine* on the invitation of the supposed host, immediately withdrew with his numerous suite of assistants, to the no small entertainment of the company, and the great joy of Mr. Ross, who shortly afterwards came forth to exclaim:

"Celui qui rit le dernièr a le meilleur du jeu."

This ill-treated gentleman, after escaping to England, and preferring charges against Governor Murray and President Rough, was subsequently reinstated in one or more of his previous offices. The arbitrary proceeding and character of President Rough led to his suspension by the governor on the 1st of October, 1821, and the Honourable Van Ryk de Groot was appointed *ad interim*, until the arrival from England of his Honour Charles Wray, barrister-at-law, who arrived on the 27th of December of the same year, and took his seat as President of the Court of Criminal and Civil Justice, and sole judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty, &c.

Under a sound lawyer and amiable man the legal administration of the colony proceeded quietly.

But whilst such changes were agitating the upper classes of society, the work of the missionaries had proceeded. Their influence had accomplished a change in the conduct of the slaves; a gradual feeling of intelligence had been spread; a desire for knowledge began to abound. Schools for the slave children, although at first opposed by some of the planters, were established upon many of the larger estates. The class of blacks or coloured freed men rescued from the bonds of slavery, either by purchasing their own freedom or indebted for it to the liberality of their former owners, was becoming

larger. Marriages among the slaves were occasionally met with, and the few but increasing privileges granted to the negroes soon gave a spur to their desires, and lent a charm to their imaginations.

The desire for liberty, and the attempt to obtain it on former occasions, had been met with stern and obstinate resistance. The passions which then actuated the slave were those of revenge and hatred, excited probably by aggravated hardship or unfeeling cruelty. The work then was of their own contrivance and at their own instigation. A natural feeling of physical superiority had led to its adoption, but the want of moral or intellectual power had caused it to fail. They had rushed gladly and suddenly to revolt, but had retired punished and humiliated. The desire though repressed was never subdued. The fire though smouldering was not extinct. It waited for a fitting time and a convenient opportunity. The stillness of the storm was to precede its fury.

Ille Etiam cæcus instare tumultus.

The more the mind of the slave became expanded the more it appreciated its indignity. The more it was instructed and enlightened the more it revolted at the stigma of bondage. But the antagonism of intellectual influence continued to keep in check the rising energy of the slave; several instances of partial and individual revolt had frequently occurred, but the want of judgment and unanimity had rendered abortive such attempts, yet, as Bacon expresses himself, "for as it is true that every vapour or fume doth not turn into a storm, so it is, nevertheless, true that storms, though they blow over divers times, yet may fall at last, and, as the Spanish proverb noteth well, 'The cord breaketh at the last by the weakest pull.'"

The white man slumbered on the edge of a volcano

whose early rumblings and intestine commotion awoke him in time to save himself from the overwhelming lava of its eruption. Another crisis was approaching which was to let loose the true feelings of all, and to lay bare the social condition of all classes in their naked selfishness. The slave was still at his toil; the freed man was still spurning the race from which he had so recently emerged, and yearning for the class above him; the white man was still engaged in his profitable speculations. When far away from the scene that comprised these varied groups the voice of eloquence and the intellect of civilisation were employed in the consideration of the momentous subject of emancipation. Within the walls of the British Houses of Legislature many an eloquent harangue had been heard, many a noble aspiration breathed. The theorist and the philanthropist were carried away by the greatness of the theme, and were anxious to let loose a power, the nature and working of which they were unacquainted with. From the time that Thomas Clarkson, in 1787, had raised his voice in the House of Commons against the traffic in slaves, the subject was never lost sight of. In the declamations of Pitt, Fox, Buxton, Brougham, Wilberforce, and Canning we recognise the predominant and lofty sentiments which influenced these great men. It was not, however, until the subject of emancipation had been more than once discussed that, on the 15th March, 1823, Mr. Canning passed in the House of Commons his famous "*Resolution* for *ameliorating* the condition of the slave population and preparing *them for freedom.*" Intimation of these resolutions was forwarded to the governors of the colonies, and, amongst others, to Governor Murray, of British Guiana. There is no doubt that these "resolutions" were intended for general information, and more especially for communication to the slaves. These latter,

as already explained, dwelt on the subject of their freedom with delight; anything relative to it was received with unmitigated pleasure and satisfaction. The object of the missionaries had not been alone to instruct in the Gospel, and the effects of their intercourse with the people soon became more apparent. What must have been the feelings of the negro when first told that not only in his own bosom burned the love of liberty, but that in distant Europe the hearts of noble strangers beat in unision with his own. Such intelligence gave him more exalted notions of himself, but it also awakened feelings of bitter hatred against the unfortunate planter. Freely admitting the necessity for the abolition of slavery, and advocating its cause, we cannot forget that a large class of sufferers was to result from the change, and that the blow which was to shiver and break asunder the fetters of slavery, was also to convulse by its shock the length and breadth of the land. Vague and imperfect conceptions of the blessings of freedom were put forth. Rumours of speedy release were whispered about, and to the idle gossiping of a servant we owe the outbreak of a bloody insurrection. This time it was not alone the impulse to be free which urged on the slave, but the idea that he had the co-operation of a superior power to aid his own, and that in seizing the cutlass to strike for freedom he was only wresting justice from the tardy and illiberal hand which withheld it. Secret societies among the slaves were gradually formed, and there is no doubt that in this they were assisted by some of the missionaries, whether for good or evil it were hard to determine.

Foremost among this sect was *Missionary Smith*, who had established a chapel on the east coast, and who by his preaching and manner towards the negro in that district had acquired a wonderful popularity and in-

fluence. The presence, possibly the advice, of the white man at such meetings gave an ardour to their hopes and to their designs. Feelings of dissatisfaction were here openly expressed, loud causes of complaint brought forward, and expressions of hatred and revenge freely given vent to. Communication was established with the negroes on the neighbouring estates; and, indeed, with many others throughout the whole colony, and unanimity and prudence enjoined. The east coast was the focus of the revolt; and here were the seeds of a conspiracy sown which were soon to spring up. The whisper of rebellion was breathed around, but its echo reached not yet the ear of the planter. A report gained ground among the head men of several plantations on the coast, that in England some great change for their amelioration had taken place; that, in fact, "Freedom had come out," and that the news was withheld by the governor and their masters, who objected to it. This rumour is supposed to have occurred through a servant of the governor's, who, whilst waiting at his master's table, had heard mention made of the "Resolutions of Mr. Canning," and who had imbibed a mistaken notion of their purport, and had circulated the false rumour, which acquired strength as it proceeded.

> Fama, malum qua non aliud Velocius ullum:
> Mobilitate viget, vires que acquirit Eundo, &c.

This little grain of falsehood, borne on the wings of credulity, took deep root, and eventually brought forth mischief. The opinions of the slaves, swayed backwards and forwards by the violence of their passions, at length settled down into a determined plot. A plan was accordingly arranged on several estates on the east coast, following which, they agreed to arise suddenly, seize, bind, and put into the stocks all the white persons on

the estates, and then go to town in a body, and claim from the governor "the freedom which was supposed to have come out."* The plan of operation appears to have been matured on *Sunday*, the 17th of August, 1823, at the Missionary Chapel, on plantation Le Resouvenir, and was intended to be carried into effect the following day. The principal authors of the scheme were two young men; Paris, a boat-captain of plantation Good Hope, a negro of superior intelligence and great bodily strength; and Jack Gladstone, also a very intelligent man, a cooper by trade, on plantation Success. Almost all the slaves on the east coast were privy to the plot, so general were its ramifications. The train now was laid, and only awaited the application of the match to give it explosion, when, by a timely intimation on the part of one of the negroes cognisant of the scheme, but who had not joined in it, some of the intended consequences were averted, but, unfortunately, not in time to prevent the effusion of much blood.

Early on Monday morning, the 18th of August, a mulatto servant, Joseph, belonging to Mr. Simpson, of plantation Reduit (now plantation Ogle), about six miles from Georgetown, communicated to his master the startling intelligence, that all the coast negroes would rise that night. It appears this man was one of the very persons upon whose authority concerning the rumour of "Freedom having come out," the plot had been originally formed; he had observed signs of great dissatisfaction prevalent among the negroes, and had noticed the fact of frequent private meetings; his suspicions were in consequence awakened, and he determined to watch their proceedings.† Not being a confederate himself, he per-

* From all that I have been able to learn on this subject, I do not believe that the intentions of the slaves had any reference to the expulsion or murder of the white inhabitants.

† Bryant's account of the insurrection.

suaded a negro (Denderdaag), on the same estate, to act the part of a spy, by which means he ascertained positively the progress of events. Satisfied as to their truth, he acquainted his master with the fact; and this gentleman, duly appreciating the information, made no appearance of alarm, but instantly left his estate for the purpose of communicating to the governor the disclosure which had been made to him. On his way to Georgetown, he called at several plantations on the road, to caution the planters of the threatened danger. About ten o'clock, Captain Simpson (for he was a burgher officer, and commanded a troop of cavalry in Georgetown), had an interview with the governor, who at first ridiculed the idea of a revolt,* but who prudently directed that the cavalry should be assembled; and, after a consultation with the fiscal, despatched a portion of the troop under Captain Simpson to plantation Reduit, and shortly after, followed himself, attended by the brigade-major of militia, an aide-de-camp, and the government secretary. On his arrival at the estate, orders were given for a sergeant and four troopers to proceed at once to a military post at Mahaica Creek, about fifteen miles higher up the coast, and directions given to leave word with the other burgher officers and planters on the road. The governor, having held an investigation on the spot, in which the negro Joseph was closely questioned, and the truth of his statement being evident, it was ascertained that a spirit of insubordination and rebellion was in active progress among the slave population; almost immediately after, a supposed ringleader, Mars, was taken up on suspicion, and the governor and escort proceeded up the coast to ascertain the extent and situation of the rebellion.

* As I have been assured by Abraham Garnett, Esq., at that time an opulent and influential planter, who accompanied him to town.

The party was met by a large body of armed negroes, who on seeing them shouted out "We have them, we have them." His excellency stopped and demanded what they wanted. They replied "our right." The governor, before entering upon any discussion, insisted upon their laying down their arms. At first they positively refused to do so, but by degrees some few set the example. His excellency then stated to them the nature of the instructions which he had received from the British Government, relative to a proposed amelioration in their condition, but warned them that any acts of insubordination committed by them would deprive them of the benefit intended. After further admonition and remonstrance, he called upon them to disperse, and stated, that if they had any cause of complaint, or required any further explanation respecting the communication which he had received from England, they should call on him the following morning. A few seemed inclined to listen to his suggestions, but others cried out "No, no," and a blowing of shells followed. Finding further expostulation useless, his excellency drove off. It cannot but be regretted that the explanation thus voluntarily offered by the governor had not previously been made. Unaccountable as was the cause of delay in announcing the intelligence received, it was now set about too late. The procrastination of an act of common justice was perhaps a proximate, if not an immediate, cause of the calamities which ensued.

The flame of revolt had burst forth, and was spreading, not to be extinguished till it had consumed many a valuable life. The insurrection had, in point of fact, commenced, a large fire on plantation La Bonne Intention was the signal for attack, and its fury was only equalled by the excited populace. Towards nightfall several white persons on some of the estates were taken

prisoners and put in the stocks. On some properties, where a defence had been made, fire-arms were had recourse to by the negroes, who killed and wounded several of the planters. Their plan of attack was to surround the dwelling-house, and either forcibly enter it or set fire to it. Their object was to capture the white inhabitants and to confine them. In most cases, however, they met with resistance, and hence arose violence and bloodshed. Upon one or two estates, however, the negroes refused to assist the insurgents in making prisoners of their masters, and offered a stern opposition to their intrusion. It could easily be seen that the spirit of unanimity was wanting, and that the present revolt was more an outbreak of excited popular feeling than a well concocted and determined attempt to overturn all rule and authority. The governor, after leaving the coast, returned to Georgetown late that evening, and seeing the necessity for more decisive measures, instantly ordered out a detachment of the 21st N.B. Fusiliers and the 1st West India Regiment, and marched them up the coast.

The bugle sounded to arms through the town, and the inhabitants serving in the militia obeyed the summons with the utmost alacrity. Soon learning the cause of their assembling, they arranged themselves under their respective commanders. A number of them were likewise marched up the coast, others patrolled the streets, and the remainder were under arms all night. The troops sent up the coast were reinforced, and met a body of insurgents, who were obstructing the passage to town of several officers of the country militia and other gentlemen. The negroes, more intent on watching the latter, and not expecting to encounter any regular troops, were astonished at the advance of the body of soldiers under Captain Stewart, and immediately on the discovery a

shot was fired at them by one of the slaves; this was instantly followed by a volley from the troops, which dispersed the slaves, and they effected a junction with the above-mentioned body of gentlemen, one of whom, it appears, was severely wounded by the discharge from the troops. The united forces then proceeded up the coast, and finding several parties of the insurgents, fired at and dispersed them with considerable loss of life to the negroes.

Early the next day, the 19th August, the drum in Georgetown beat to arms, and the inhabitants being assembled, were addressed by his excellency the governor, who proclaimed "martial law." The effect of this was immense. Business was put a stop to. The minds of all were excited, and, like a hive of bees which has been disturbed, the whole town was one scene of tumult and confusion. Many of the ladies were conveyed on board of vessels in the river, and every preparation was made for a sanguinary and protracted conflict. A battalion of militia was raised, amounting to about 600 persons, whilst a marine battalion was formed from the crews of ships in the river, and mustered about 400. Two pieces of artillery were placed so as to command the two principal entrances into town. Meanwhile, nearly all the gangs of negroes upon the estates on the coast had assembled in great numbers; they were armed with cutlasses, guns, and other weapons, and were headed by individuals who carried flags.

With much noise and bravado they paraded up and down the coast, but appeared to have no definite object in view beyond capturing the few white persons they might meet. Encountering, however, bodies of troops and militia, they were easily dispersed, yet collected again in greater numbers, irresolute in conduct, and uncertain as to their movements. One party made an in-

effectual attempt to seize the military post at Mahaica, but were gallantly repulsed by the few persons under the command of Lieutenant Brady. Fresh bodies of troops continued to arrive from town, and formed a tolerably large force under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Leahy, of the 21st, who scoured the country, taking numerous prisoners, and shooting a great many of the unfortunate negroes. Upon one occasion the troops encountered a band of about 2000 slaves, when Colonel Leahy advanced himself towards them, asking what they wanted, and endeavoured to persuade them to lay down their arms. They gave, in answer, that they wanted two days in the week for themselves, some said three days, others that they wanted freedom, and that the king had sent it out, adding that "they would be free." Finding no disposition on their part to disperse, Colonel Leahy read the proclamation of martial law by the governor, and gave a copy to one of the ringleaders. Threatening them with fire of the troops if they did not retire, he left them, accompanied by Captain Croal, who had followed him. After waiting for some time orders were given for the troops to advance, who, being defied by the negroes, fired at and dispersed them with great slaughter. A slight fire was returned on the side of the slaves, and kept up for a few minutes on both sides, but the latter soon retired to the cotton-fields. The soldiers then proceeded onwards, and occupied the neighbouring buildings. Most of the bridges forming the line of communication of the roads had been destroyed by the insurgents, who thought thus to prevent the junction of the whites. In the mean time, many of the prisoners taken were, after a short trial, summarily executed, as a warning to the others. A constant skirmishing was kept up along nearly the whole line of the coast, but in no one instance had the slaves any advantage. Greatly

superior in number they wanted organisation, and the lack of discipline and defined object rendered them helpless to the attack of the roused white inhabitants.

On the 20th of August, another proclamation was issued by the governor, holding out encouragement to those slaves not actually concerned in the insurrection, and threatening them if an opposite course were pursued; but of what avail to an illiterate mob could such a proclamation be? They had already dyed their hands in blood; and, half paralysed at their own exploits, stood awaiting with indifference the result. Those who were condemned to death, bore their fate with marked heroism and fortitude. They experienced no regret for their conduct, and deplored only the ill result of it. Others of the prisoners were sent under escort to town, to await a more formal trial. A great number of the fugitive slaves fled to the woods, and it was proposed to chase them out with the assistance of the native Indians, who upon this occasion came forward with alacrity to assist the white inhabitants. It only remained for the troops to collect as many of the ringleaders as possible, and to prevent any further outbreak by their presence and discipline. The masses of negroes began gradually to disperse; many who had taken refuge in the cotton-fields and woods, returned by degrees to their houses. Several gangs of negroes resumed their work as if nothing had happened, and the panic-struck inhabitants resumed their former occupations and tranquillity. On the 22nd, four days after the breaking out of the slaves, the governor issued a third proclamation of full and free pardon to all slaves (ringleaders excepted) who within forty-eight hours should deliver themselves up to his clemency; and all were enjoined to lay down their arms, and return to their duties.

In other parts of the colony there had been no open

demonstration of revolt; but evidently the feelings of insubordination had also spread in all directions, and undoubtedly would have declared itself, had anything like success attended the revolt on the east coast. As it was, many of the ringleaders escaped and hid themselves in the various districts, causing great excitement wherever their presence was suspected. In a short time the greater part were taken prisoners and brought to Georgetown, where a formal trial was instituted. His excellency issued a warrant, in the name of his Majesty, for assembling and constituting a general court-martial, which was opened on the 25th of August, composed of several officers of the garrison and militia. After an investigation, which continued for many days, 45 insurgent negroes were found guilty, and sentenced to death; but out of this number, 18 were respited. Of the many who perished by the arms of the militia and soldiers, the exact number is not known, but it must have been considerable; whilst, on the other hand, it does not appear that more than a few white persons were killed, and several others wounded.

But the colonists, in thus speedily arresting the insurrection, had not forgotten the supposed instigators. It has been stated that to the effect of missionary influence much of the late evil had resulted. The missionary Smith, at whose chapel and in whose neighbourhood the plan of revolt had been supposed to have been matured, was arrested and put in prison. On the 13th of October a general court-martial, similarly constituted as the one for the trial of the negroes, was held in order to investigate the charges preferred against him, which accused him of engendering feelings of discontent and dissatisfaction among the negroes towards their lawful masters; of advising, counselling, and corresponding with certain ringleaders of the revolt, and of having withheld the

communication of his knowledge of the intended rebellion from the proper authorities. After a lengthened and important trial, which lasted upwards of a month, he was found guilty on some of the charges, and had the sentence of death passed on him on the 24th of November. Meanwhile he was remanded to prison, there to await the confirmation of the sentence from his Majesty George IV. He, however, became ill shortly after his imprisonment, and in spite of every care and medical attendance, died on the 6th of February of the year 1824. The sentence of death was reprieved by his Majesty, but the intelligence did not reach the colony until the 30th of March. Directions were, however, forwarded to have him dismissed from the colony of Demerary and Essequebo, and to prohibit him from residing in any of the settlements in the West Indies; but, as we have seen, a Superior Power had already translated him to another world, there to await the judgment of an all-seeing Providence, who alone knoweth the secrets of the heart.

However innocent may have been his intention, however charitably inclined his endeavours, it cannot be denied that he acted with great imprudence in encouraging rather than subduing the disaffection of the slaves towards their masters. It was not likely that his voice alone could instil into the hearts of his audience a sufficient knowledge of their position. It was unwise, nay dangerous, to let loose the reins of a power with whose working he was ignorant; and to listen with complacency to the schemes of a multitude which was about to perpetrate a deed of violence. It may be argued that no act of bloodshed was intended, that no individual life was threatened, and that he only listened with indiscretion to the proposition of the slave to claim from the governor that which was considered as a right. But

such a man could have been little versed in the knowledge of human nature to suppose for an instant that the planters would quietly stand by whilst they saw their bondsmen leave the field of toil and assemble in hundreds with arms in their hands, for the purpose of marching to town. He must have placed too much confidence in the virtue of human nature to suppose that the principle once allowed of voluntarily quitting the estates would have been followed by the quiet return of the people to their work. How could he have hoped that such a display of armed force would have been rewarded by the gift of unqualified freedom? Little could he have reflected upon the effects which in all probability would have resulted if in the first instance the revolt of the slaves had been attended with success. He could have watched the events of ages with but little sagacity if he knew not that a conspiracy, once attempted, with but the most moderate intention, runs on to violence and excess, and none could tell the fury of an unbridled and triumphant mob. The French Revolution commenced only with the unostentatious plea of redressing the wrongs of the lower classes. It ended, alas, in the horrors of a civil war unparalleled in atrocity, in the overthrow of the nobles, and in the murder of royalty.

However unwilling we are to participate in the bitter animosity which was displayed towards him and his brother missionaries by the colonists, and however little inclined to extenuate their fearful revenge on the mistaken slaves, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that John Smith was cognisant of an intended movement on the part of the negroes to claim their freedom, and that he had it consequently in his power to have averted all those evils which his ill-timed silence entailed upon himself, upon his misguided people, and upon the colony at large. This one solemn startling fact is sufficient of

itself to cast a stain upon his character, however otherwise pure and amiable, and to check us in that deep sympathy which we would otherwise have felt for his imprisonment, obloquy, and death.*

Thus ended the insurrection of 1823, which, whether we consider the serious consequences which might have resulted had the slaves been victorious, or the indiscriminate slaughter of a small party of troops and militia against an undisciplined host, is an era in the history of British Guiana which cannot easily be forgotten. The crushed spirit and servile demeanour of the slave had been flung aside, and he had started up in an attitude of manly defiance and haughty daring, whilst the lordly and luxurious planter had felt appalled at the novel and frightful sight of his slave in arms. At the time of the occurrence the land in cultivation was held by about 200 proprietors, of whom only about 75 resided in the colony, showing the extent of "absenteeism," as already noticed. The cry of revolt had struck terror into the hearts of the owners of the rich soil, and confusion and dismay at first were spread abroad; but it was not long ere the clear intelligence of the Anglo-Caucasian race saw through the mist which at first obscured them, and the courage of high descent animated their bosoms; calmness succeeded to confusion; skill and bravery to alarm. Rapid and fearful as was the stroke aimed at them, it was parried with equal vigour; the weapon of aggression was soon wrenched from the threatening arm, and vengeance—tenfold vengeance, inflicted on the assailant. It is easy to say that the conquest was not difficult, and that the victory was obtained over feeble opponents. It is possible to conjecture that a bloody revolt was actually brought

* It is also positively asserted that Quanima, one of the leaders in the rebellion, was harboured by this unfortunate missionary after a reward had been publicly offered for his capture.

on, by a warlike defence, before even an actual assault had been made, and that the fears and fury of the excited colonists made the strife of battle, when only a simple war of words was intended. But it is much easier to ridicule the exploits of an armed and disciplined force over untutored savages, and to censure their cruelty, than to assert what would be one's own feelings during an occasion such as we have described. Had the revolt been general throughout the colony; had its organisation been laid secretly and developed skilfully; had the slave population risen suddenly and rapidly as one man, then would the generation of planters have, perhaps, been swept from the land of British Guiana, and the flag of self-accomplished freedom been unfurled, all stained with blood, to the Western Isles. The shout of the triumphant serf would have drowned the cries of his conquered master. But it was not so; the long possessed power of the white man had exercised its influence on his slave. The mind, which had bowed in bondage to the will of a superior, could not shake off its allegiance in an hour, although that hour was one of passion and madness. It had deceived itself. Excited by desire and persuasion, goaded on, perhaps, by insult and wrong, it thought its power strong enough to grapple with the fancied oppressor; its determination strong enough to resist the power of authority; the hour of trial came, and it was found wanting; the attempt had been made in earnest, but had failed. The defeated slave returned humbled and self-abased to resume his wonted task, and to serve in dogged sullenness and silence.

CHAPTER XI.

REJOICING AFTER THE INSURRECTION OF 1824—REWARDS TO THE OFFICERS—EXPENSES OF THE INSURRECTION—PUBLIC FEELING AGAINST THE MISSIONARIES—CHANGE OF GOVERNORS—RETIREMENT OF BRIGADIER-GENERAL MURRAY—REVIEW OF HIS CHARACTER—ARRIVAL OF SIR BENJAMIN D'URBAN AS LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR—COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, 1825—PROTECTOR OF SLAVES APPOINTED—DEMERARA AND ESSEQUEBO DIVIDED INTO PARISHES—CHURCH AND POOR FUND—MONETARY CHANGES—EAGER SPECULATIONS IN PROPERTY—ANTICIPATION OF EMANCIPATION—OPINIONS ON THE SUBJECT—THE THREE COLONIES UNITED UNDER ONE GOVERNMENT, 1831—REVIEW OF EVENTS IN BERBICE—ALTERATION OF CIVIL AND CRIMINAL COURTS—SEPARATION OF FINANCIAL REPRESENTATIVES FROM COLLEGE OF KEIZERS—CONSOLIDATED SLAVE ORDINANCES, 1832—INFERIOR COURTS ESTABLISHED—GOVERNMENT OF SIR BENJAMIN D'URBAN—ABSTRACT OF RATIO OF MORTALITY AMONG SLAVES.

THE rejoicings that followed the suppression of the revolt marked a bright page in the dark annals of British Guiana. Martial law, after having been put into force for a period of five months, was discontinued on the 19th January, 1824; the terrible executions of the insurgents ceased, and the year opened with a public acknowledgment from the governor to the officers and soldiers, regulars and militia, of his excellency's high sense of their valuable services. Addresses and tributes followed from the Court of Policy and the inhabitants generally to the officers who had most distinguished themselves in these unhappy transactions. A costly sword was presented by the court to Lieutenant-Colonel Leahy, worth 200 guineas, and another, of the value of

fifty guineas, to Lieutenant Brady. To the officers of the 21st Regiment a sum of 500 guineas was presented for the purchase of plate for the use of their regimental mess, and another sum of 200 guineas to the officers of the West Indian Regiment for a similar object. A piece of plate of the value of 350 guineas was also given to Lieutenant-Colonel Leahy, of the 21st, by some of the inhabitants, and a cheque for 1000*l.* to Lieutenant Brady, by the colonists of the east coast and others. The able commandant of the Georgetown militia, Lieutenant-Colonel Goodman, received from the inhabitants a sum of 400*l.* to be laid out in plate, and 100*l.* for the purchase of a sword. The bonds of social harmony were drawn closer by the escape from the common dangers which had threatened the whole community, and the universal alarm and despondency was changed into an outburst of popular festivity.

The expense of the insurrection amounted to upwards of 200,000 dollars, which was principally met by a new issue of colonial paper money to the amount of 24,193 joes—raising the total amount issued to 100,000 joes.

Other important consequences followed in the wake of this painful drama. So excited and prejudiced were the feelings of the colonists against the class of missionaries, that at a public meeting, held in Georgetown on the 24th February, it was resolved, "That the Court of Policy be forthwith petitioned to expel all missionaries from the colony, and that a law be passed prohibiting the admission of any missionary preachers into this colony for the future." It seems hardly credible that the colonists could have so far forgotten themselves as to act in so vindictive a spirit, or that they should have been so weak as to suppose that, by excluding the missionaries, they could succeed in extinguishing the desire for knowledge and freedom amongst the negroes. That desire once awakened

is not to be repressed by penal enactments; and, nourished in the primeval solitudes of the forests, and upon the lonely coast whose waters washed the distant lands where men were free, the slave needed no teacher to make him aspire to the blessing of liberty.

Governor Murray, who had become the idol of the inhabitants by his late conduct, was not permitted to enjoy his triumph long. He was immediately afterwards recalled by an order from London; and on the 24th April, Major-General Sir Benjamin D'Urban arrived to assume the government. On the occasion of Governor Murray's retirement, he was presented by the colonists with a piece of plate of the value of 1200 guineas, "in memorial of the happy suppression of the late revolt." With this popular and able governor a great many of the traces of a slave country disappeared, never to return. That he was a popular governor, none, I believe, would deny; that he was likewise able and intelligent must be admitted, when we consider that he remained about eleven years at the head of the administration of a colony which was undergoing the most rapid social changes, and that during the term of his government many acts of vast public and private importance were introduced by his advice and influence. If, in the closing scene of his career as governor he displayed some want of judgment with reference to the approaching emancipation of the slave, the error was of the head, and not of the heart. A great step was taken from the period of the insurrection in the march of improvement. From the date of its fortunate suppression may be traced the dawning of a brighter day for the negroes, and a whispering of foreboding evil to the planter. A gap in the ordinary progress of events seemed suddenly filled up, and men acquired in a short time the experience of years. Emancipation was no longer looked upon as chimerical. The

habits of the white man had been too extensively adopted by the slave to be easily cast off; and the ideas of independence, which had taken deep root in his mind, had already begun to develop their power over his actions. In the late movement he had given a warning proof of the fortitude with which he could persevere in the pursuit of the object which ever engrossed his whole life. The condition of the negroes was altered. They were no longer insensate, stolid, and incapable of combination and unanimity; and, however crude and imperfect their first attempt at co-operation, it was evident that they had acquired a clear sense of the importance of union for the attainment of the end towards which they struggled. They were already rising in the social scale; some of them were promoted to situations of trust and confidence, and others had in their turn become masters, and actually owned slaves. In this character, however, they did not appear to advantage, and showed by their harshness and severity that as yet they little understood the "duties" of property, although they were nothing loth to assert its "rights."

The slave of the slave suggests a painful image of authority exercised, and toil exacted, by men over their equals in birth, education, and civilisation. The negro early displayed an anxiety to possess such an authority and power, and it will not be inapt to remark that the change in condition had also occasioned a change in sentiment, for the individual who in his day of slavery had cursed the hated name and scouted its attributes, became, when freed, as jealous of his new rights, and as tenacious of his privileges, as the European, whom the prospect of emancipation scared. Why, then, attribute to either race those vices which are inherent in the circumstances in which they are placed, rather than in their original natures? since it is evident that, had their positions

been reversed, the negro would have made as jealous a taskmaster as the white man, and the European as indignant and stubborn a slave as the black. The moral is obvious, and tells with equal effect on both sides.

It may be asked how the slave could obtain the means of purchasing his freedom; how the man who lived in bondage and toiled for the advantage of another, could have contrived to amass the funds necessary for his redemption from chains. But this can be easily explained. It had been long the custom to allow the negro certain privileges and hours of leisure, which he might employ in any way he chose. Many had naturally turned their attention towards supplying the wants which they found to exist among their superiors and their neighbours. The cultivation of their little patches of land, the raising of stock, the catching of fish, were some of the methods by which they acquired money. There were also certain extra tasks, for which they were sometimes well paid. In addition to these resources, the most promising of the slaves were taught various trades. Some were employed as coopers, carpenters, masons, boatmen, &c.; and it was not unusual for persons owning a few slaves to hire out their services for a given sum, beyond which anything that they made themselves was for their own use. Several came to be employed as vendors of different articles for household uses, &c., and receiving the name of "hucksters," traversed the country on the business of their employers. By such and similar means the negro occasionally managed to accomplish his liberation. An additional stimulus was now about to be given to the advancement of his order by the spirit of European liberty. Well would it have been for the negro, and the colony generally, had the coming boon been regulated by justice and wisdom, and the mind of the slave been prepared for his new duties by being duly impressed with

the paramount necessity of industry, morality, and self-regeneration.

The arrival of Sir Benjamin D'Urban from the island of Antigua, where he had resided some time, was the commencement of a new era. He found the colony still unsettled from the consequences of the late outbreak, and the planter and the negro both looking forward to the changes he had been empowered to introduce. By his Majesty's orders, commissioners of inquiry into the administration of justice arrived shortly after, for the purpose of remodelling those anomalies in the administration of the land, to which reference has already been made. In the following year, an ordinance, after some opposition, was passed by the governor and Court of Policy, entitled "An Ordinance for the Religious Instructions of Slaves, and for Meliorating their Condition." It was dated September 7th, published October 15th, and was to take effect on the 1st January, 1826. It provided for the appointment of a protector of slaves; secured the slaves an immunity from labour (except in certain specific cases) from sunset on Saturday to sunrise on Monday; limited field work from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M., with two hours' intermission; prohibited the whip from being carried into the field; abolished the whipping of women; limited punishment to 25 lashes; required a record of punishments to be kept; secured to the slaves the privileges of marriage, of acquiring and holding property, and of purchasing their freedom. An officer from England, Colonel A. W. Young, was appointed to the new office of "protector of slaves," a title conveying a satire upon the conduct of the community, and certainly not very complimentary to the governor himself. The duties required of this officer were vexatious and arduous. His position was likely to render him obnoxious to many of the colonists, while it required great prudence, judgment,

and firmness to enable him to deal with the frivolous complaints of slaves on the one side, and to soothe the offended dignity of employers and owners on the other. But such qualifications were eminently possessed by Colonel Young, and his whole bearing, career, and conduct were marked by impartiality, determination, and wisdom. The nature of his duties was fully developed in subsequent proclamations and other ordinances, and some of their principal features may be thus described :

Protectors, and assistant protectors, not to own or manage slaves; to be warranted in entering into negro houses on estates, &c.; privilege given to slaves to pass and repass to protector to make complaints, penalty in opposing protector's duties, power to summons witnesses, and to examine them; witnesses not attending may be committed to gaol; protector not to act as magistrate; protectors to act as coroners, and also appear in behalf of slaves prosecuted; to prohibit Sunday markets, Sunday labour, and Sunday traffic, under penalties; (with certain exceptions) to determine regulations about use of the whip; forfeiture of slaves in cases of cruelty and ill-treatment; slaves made competent to marry, and to apply for such license to protector; slaves not to be proprietors of boats, ammunition, &c.; slaves not to be proprietors of slaves; relationship of slaves to be attended to; fees of office and duties on manumissions abolished; slaves may effect the purchase of their freedom by a compulsory process; evidence of slaves to be admitted; concluding with rules and regulations respecting the food and maintenance of slaves; the duration of labour, clothing, medical attendance, religious worship, and other important subjects.

In the year 1825, the districts of Demerara and Essequebo were divided into parishes, ten in number, distinct and separate; a great improvement from the simple

division into plantations and burgher districts. As a natural sequence, churches began to be built, and duly qualified clergymen arrived to undertake the rather arduous duty of regenerating the morality of the colony. Among the other churches so established was one for Roman Catholics, the first stone of which was laid by the governor. This church was ultimately endowed by the colony. All the regular appurtenances of such establishments were soon after introduced by the improving efforts of civilisation; such as the formation of vestries, with "an act to regulate them;" also, at a later period, an act for "Regulating and preserving Registers of Baptism, Marriages, and Burials, in the united colony of Demerara and Essequebo." An establishment called "The Church and Poor's Fund" had been in existence since 1824, and different acts for its regulation and guidance continued to be enforced, till the whole system became completely altered. The origin of this fund took its rise with the Dutch, who, as we have seen, so early as the year 1792, had instituted a consistory of at least two deacons and two elders, to which consistory the control of Church and Poor moneys was to be entrusted, &c. A consistory thus composed existed on each of the inhabited rivers, viz.:—Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice. Afterwards, or in 1793, it was decreed that all "imports leviable for funds of Church and Poor moneys should thenceforth be received by the respective receivers of the poor's chest, as members administering, and thereunto commissioned, out of the consistory." The system thus established obtained until 1816, when the "administration thereof was vested in the clergymen of the Established Church of England, in the minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and in the minister of the Kirk of Scotland within the said united colonies." But as this

was never authorised or confirmed by his Majesty, an order in council in 1824 founded in the united colonies a body corporate, styled "The Board of Church and Poor's Fund," &c., consisting of a president and six members, viz.:—the senior clergyman of the Church of England, who acted as president; the Dutch minister, the Scotch minister, the first fiscal, and three other persons, to be named by the governor, none of whom were to receive any salary; a treasurer and secretary were appointed with a salary, as well as a clerk. Another later act in 1830, for "Regulating the claims of the Board of Church and Poor's Fund upon the property of persons receiving maintenances from the board," enacted several clauses relative to persons assigning over their property to such funds, &c. &c. A similar body corporate was also established at a subsequent period by Governor Smyth, for the district of Berbice.

An alteration in the monetary affairs of the colony also took place in 1825, when British coin was introduced, and an order in council declared "that a tender and payment of British silver money, to the amount of four shillings and fourpence, should be considered as equivalent to the tender or payment of one Spanish dollar, and so in proportion for any greater or less amount of debt," &c. Hence, British coin became a legal tender for the discharge of debts and other business. "And whereas the said British silver and copper money has been sent out to this united colony, consisting of

Silver..... Half crowns, shillings, and sixpences,
Copper..... Pence, half-pence, and farthings;

"It is hereby declared and ordered, that the said British silver and copper money shall, from and after the 24th day of September, 1825, be legal tender and payment, at the rate and value following:

British coin.	Guilders.	Stivers.	Pennings (col. money)
Half crowns	1	15	...
Shillings (or 12 pence)	...	14	...
Sixpence	...	7	...
One penny	...	1	...
Halfpenny	...	...	10
Farthing	...	...	5

"And all persons are further informed that they may demand from the chief officer of the commissariat department in this colony bills upon the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury at thirty days' sight, in exchange for any sums whatever tendered by them in British silver, not less in amount than 100*l.*, at the fixed rate of a bill, 100*l.* for every 103*l.* of British silver money so tendered."

The legal par of exchange was raised from 12 to 14 guilders. During the suspension of specie payments by the Bank of England, and the consequent depreciation of the pound sterling, Spanish dollars had passed current in the colony at the rate of three guilders each. Upon the restoration of specie payments by the bank, the pound sterling recovered its original value; but the excessive issue of joe notes prevented a similar result in the colony. A Spanish dollar was still worth three guilders of the paper money, or of the debased silver of the colony; and it consequently became necessary to raise the legal par of exchange. Thus, the joe of this colony, which was originally worth 8 dollars and 40 cents, in consequence of the excessive issue of paper, sunk to the value of 7 dollars 33$\frac{1}{3}$ cents. Such were some of the principal changes effected about this period.

The social condition of the inhabitants appeared to be but little influenced by these innovations, nor did property lose any of its value, either by the threatened calamity of the insurrection, or the contemplated measures for improving the state of the labouring classes. Speculations of all kinds were pursued with a determination

which ensured success. We have seen that the arrival of Europeans increased after the colonies had been taken possession of by the British, but more especially since 1815; and it had long been the custom for persons possessed of little capital to purchase estates upon credit, trusting to the large profits to be made by their cultivation for the means of paying off the debt by instalments. Instances had occurred in which persons without any capital at all had made purchases of property, and been enabled, in the course of a few years, to become the undoubted proprietors of such estates. The way by which these transactions were conducted was as follows:—A gentleman of good address and connexion would offer to take over an estate, giving bills of exchange on well-known firms in England or elsewhere; this arrangement being accepted, he proceeded home at once, before the bills could be presented, and explained his object and intentions to the firm with whom he might, or might not, have had previous dealings or acquaintance; the bills being accepted, the money was duly paid, the parties advancing the money receiving and selling the sugars or other produce, sending out supplies, and making themselves secure by holding one or more mortgages on the property, which, in the case of unsuccessful speculations of this kind, eventually fell into their hands. This system of advancing money upon property entailed much misery in the long run upon the planters, and although it was attended by extraordinary success at first, it led to the introduction of artificial principles, which reduced the value of property to a mere nominal amount, and finally engendered all sorts of abuses. It is now completely abandoned.

From this time forward the desire to become connected in some way or other with landed property may be described as a sort of mania. It is not diffi-

cult to trace the cause of this. In all countries there are certain pursuits which entitle those who follow them to an aristocratic position. In some, as in Russia, the military profession brings particular distinction; in England, a seat in the Legislature; and in Europe generally, stars, ribands, and titles. Comparing small things with great, the grand claim to distinction in British Guiana was, and still continues to be, the possession of landed property in the shape of an estate. Apart from higher walks of ambition, this local glory is regarded as the greatest honour. Of course it is not attended by equal advantage to all. At the commencement, the race was pretty equal, but the passion for estated properties induced so many persons to plunge into agricultural pursuits without the requisite experience, capital, or activity, that in the course of time success, instead of being the rule, became the exception. Nevertheless, as the possession of land was the only road to the attainment of the highest social rank, men who were earning a fair livelihood by their employments, professional or commercial, were still tempted to plunge into agricultural pursuits, undeterred by the examples of failures that were every day occurring around them. As the sole direction of local affairs, formerly but feebly counteracted by the few officials, thus became vested in the hands of the most wealthy among the planters, the exercise of authority inevitably took that shape and form most conducive to their special interests. Opposed to all kinds of innovations, the object of the planters was to provide and enact laws and regulations calculated for their own aggrandisement, or for that of their class. Hence it was not enough for a man to find himself gaining a reputation and fortune by other employments, so long as he felt himself dependent on the patronage or success of the planter. So that the merchant, the lawyer,

the doctor—nay, the tradesman, sought to increase his gains and advance his rank by the possession of some property. Very often, as might have been expected, such parties soon became mere nominal representatives of property. The shadow was theirs, but the substance went to another.

Quod quis vocare possit dominium indefinitum,
Non formaliter, sed concessive; non acta, sed potentia.

Advances of money had to be obtained to carry on hopeless agricultural speculations. Lavish expenditure or diminished means soon led the proprietors into difficulties; fresh sums were advanced, more mortgages entailed, until by degrees the whole management or disposal of such property passed out of the hands of the mistaken theorist, and beggary and ruin alone awaited him. The high-sounding title and imaginary wealth of the West Indian proprietor began to be questioned, and the sun of prosperity, through this and other causes, gradually waned.

The most prominent among these causes was the contemplated changes in the condition of the negro, and the steps already taken towards his future emancipation. It was looked upon as unjust to wrest from the planters the control of their purchased slaves, and to cast them unfettered upon society. The worst of evils was anticipated by measures which threatened to damage individual security, and blight the general condition of the colony. Stagnation of business, abandonment of properties, and the perpetration of all kinds of crime, were prophesied as inevitable. Anarchy and confusion were expected to be the result, and strenuous efforts were made by the inhabitants to oppose at its commencement anything like what they regarded as an innovation upon their rights. The open avowal of the contemplated emancipation of

the negro being supported on the one hand by the ministerial party, and by a powerful body, acting under the title of the "African Institution," was opposed by a smaller party with whom, as a matter of course, the colonists sided. The views of the former, or abolitionists, were regarded by the latter as "highly visionary;" it was asserted that the negroes would *retrograde* rather than *advance* in civilisation, and a powerful objection was started by a member of the legislative body, that the colonies would ultimately be lost to Great Britain. It was stated, that among the chief means of civilisation two were pre-eminent—industry and knowledge; but that the latter might be considered rather as an effect or consequence of the former: that as regards industry, "men will not work without compulsion; that compulsion is of two kinds, the coercion of a master and the dread of starvation, and that in a country where the abundance of food puts the latter stimulant out of the question, the ground, if cultivated at all, must be cultivated by the system of slavery." Again, it was asserted that "slavery was doomed to die of its own accord. In the progress of society imaginary wants are established; many articles of luxury, in clothing and lodging, are now required, and an additional expense is created in teaching the handicraft required to produce these articles. Population also is increased; the redundant supply of food, therefore, diminishes, and the cost of maintaining a slave becomes gradually greater and greater. In due time it (connected with other causes) becomes equal to the value of his labour; his master, then, finds no advantage in keeping him, and, consequently, employs free labourers." It was prognosticated that the negroes never would merge into a free working peasantry sufficient for the keeping up of cultivation in the West Indies, and that *labourers from other parts of the world would have to be brought*

to supply their place. Examples were adduced from modern and ancient history, nay, from the very Bible itself, to show that the principle of slavery had always been tolerated by the most civilised among nations, and that the present condition of the slave was far superior to what had been pursued either by the Egyptians, the Israelites, the Grecians, and the Romans. Every suggestion was offered to postpone or bring about gradually the liberation of the negro, until, in fact, their industry had been roused, and their knowledge rendered sufficient for the appreciation and the practice of the duties of a free and civilised people. How thoroughly and clearly, it must be admitted, did the colonists and their partisans, even at this period, anticipate many of the actual consequences of the emancipation; but, at the same time, how blindly did they conceive that such interested arguments would weigh with a nation which had evidently made up its mind, at any risk, to blot out the opprobrious epithet of slave from its history, and to introduce those blessings of liberty which had done so much good to every part of the world subject to its sway. The hope that Great Britain would pause ere she acted so seriously against her interest, nor thus voluntarily resign, or render doubtful for the future, the benefits she had derived from her West India possessions, was great among the colonists. Was this the flattery of self-importance, or was it a distrust in the philanthropic greatness of the British people? Possibly both; but they greatly erred in such conclusions. The feeling of anti-slavery had become too general to allow of much calm reasoning upon the subject. A few burning phrases from glowing lips had excited the minds of thousands against the system of slavery and its supporters. The populace, but little acquainted with the reality, rent the air with their indignant protests. The true facts of the case were never

stated, the real condition of the two chief parties concerned was never appreciated by the mass who clamoured for it. Some well-known instances of undoubted cruelty were the hackneyed quotations of every discourse on the subject, and became the texts for innumerable anti-slavery sermons. "Am I not a Christian and a brother?" was the inscription over pictures representing the negroes in every attitude of degradation and suffering. The really just principle at stake was cloaked over with all manner of extraneous ornament, and opposition to its accomplishment was looked upon as bigoted and selfish. The battle hitherto had been fought at a distance, but by degrees scenes of contention arose in the colonies; a party from the mother country had already found their way here, and, setting a bold front to the inhabitants, openly avowed their doctrines. The insurrection of physical force having failed, a revolution of a moral nature was next to be brought about.

Feelings of alarm began, therefore, to spread among the colonists. The strides towards emancipation were becoming more rapid. Resistance had been found worse than useless, and gloom and dissatisfaction began visibly to be evinced; a diminution in the price of sugar about the years 1828 to 1832 added to the general panic, and throughout the whole of the West India possessions there was experienced the deepest despondency. The exultation on the part of the slave was now silent, but perhaps the more heartfelt. Persons of all professions openly avowed their belief in the speedy downfal of the colonies, yet still remained spell-bound to the spot. Few made any efforts to quit the land thus threatened with a moral earthquake; while the absent proprietors still continued to live in Europe, in a style of lavish expenditure. Urgent orders were sent out to strain every nerve towards making the most of the present state of things. On the

part of the planter nothing was left undone to raise the last hogshead of sugar. All sorts of plans and projects were discussed, with a view to diminish the necessity for manual labour, and to render planters independent of the slave; but none of them were put into practice. The provision-grounds and plantain-walks on estates were left unattended to, in order that all the strength of physical power should be concentrated in the manufacture of sugar and rum. It seemed as if the proprietors had determined that the powers of the slave should be taxed to the utmost extremity, and, like the flagging spirits of a jaded beast, roused to a last superhuman performance. Those whose properties were mortgaged looked on in sullen indifference, as if the final stroke of misfortune was about to descend on them, whilst in reality it turned out that this particular class was the very one which derived the largest benefits from the ensuing events. The smaller proprietors and the freed persons, who owned a small number of slaves, upon whose existence they mainly depended, were loud in their complaints, and yet they also enjoyed afterwards a compensating gift, which to the prudent would have enabled them to embark in some other speculation; but no, they were themselves about to be robbed of their "Aladdin's lamp," and nothing else would satisfy them. They had been accustomed to one mode of life, and they could not see why the officiousness of strangers should be allowed to interfere with it. The negroes were neither conciliated nor congratulated on their approaching liberty. The happiness about to be conferred on them was the signal of destruction to the master. Distrust and vexation pervaded all ranks of the community. Every one regarded his own case as being harder than that of his neighbour. One had lately made a purchase, why should he not be allowed to derive the expected advantages? Another was about to do so,

why was he not permitted to carry out his intention? Others had always lived under the old system, and thought the proposed changes especially calamitous to himself.

Nor were such expressions of complaint confined to private remonstrance. As usual, in all colonies where the liberty of the press has existed, the grievances of the inhabitants are pretty roundly asserted through the channel of a newspaper. At the period to which we are now alluding an angry warfare was carried on with the organs of the anti-slavery party, and, in consequence of the violent tone displayed by some portion of the press, on this and other subjects, the prerogative of Governor D'Urban was exercised in suppressing one paper called the *Colonist*, and in frequently suspending the publication of another, the *Chronicle*. But the voice of the colonists could not thus be stifled, and continued to declare itself in every possible way.

It has already been noticed that several orders in Council had appeared making every provision for the benefit of the slaves. In 1830, when the "Ordinance for the Religious Instruction of Slaves, &c.," was published in the colony, the members of the court attempted to prevent the operation of this order, on the ground that it was unconstitutional and a violation of the rights of the colonists as contained in the "Plan of Redress," and guaranteed by the articles of capitulation; but the then Colonial Secretary, Lord Goderich, refused to recognise these doctrines; and the next year, by another order in Council, the court itself was remodelled.*

In the year 1831, when William the Fourth ascended the throne, the settlements on the three rivers of the colony had made great progress, the industry of the

* Local Guide, p. xxi.

Dutch and British having triumphed over the many difficulties attending "the formation of a settlement in the Tropics." The last formed settlement had now become the largest and most influential, and Essequebo had already resigned the seat of government to the less romantic, but more commercial, Demerara; whilst Berbice, left to itself, pursued a similar, but separate colonial line of policy. Although, however, thus distinct, and at different periods as important, if not more so than either of the other two settlements, yet of late it had acted more the part of a handmaiden, or younger sister, to the others; and the fortunes of Demerara and Essequebo, whether for good or evil, affected also materially the fate of Berbice. We have, at different times, given an account of the more important circumstances in the history of the district, and it only now remains to add a few more particulars as to the time when the three colonies were united into one, and to be called British Guiana, under the government of his Excellency Major-General Sir Benjamin D'Urban, K.C.B., K.C.H., &c.

The colony of Berbice, on the retirement of Governor Van Batenburg in 1806, was administered by two military officers in succession, as already noticed, who conducted the affairs of the settlement in peace and tranquillity. There was little in the even and prosperous tenor of its way which required to be chronicled; and the few incidents connected with its history at this period have been entirely overlooked by contemporaries, nor am I able to contribute much to the scanty records of its career. Its form of laws, of government, its social condition and cultivation, corresponded nearly in every repect to the sister settlements on the Demerara and Essequebo. The spirit, energy, and enterprise of the Berbiceans were not surpassed by their brother colonists.

A reference to the tables of exports and imports, from 1806 to 1831, will show that the industry of its population contributed a fair proportion of colonial produce.

The cotton raised was considered the finest in the West Indies, and commanded the highest price.

The sugar and rum manufactured were equal to that of Demerara; and the article coffee was of the best colonial quality. Maintaining its own government, the revenue and expenditure were quite distinct from that of the united colonies of Demerara and Essequebo.

The soil, and its surprising capabilities, were not inferior to any in the world. Somewhat scattered, as the population undoubtedly was, and distant as were the estates one from the other, the utmost industry prevailed among its secluded members, who were composed, perhaps, of a larger proportion of foreigners than in the other two districts; but, nevertheless, the greatest cordiality and good-will were extended to the inhabitants of the sister settlements, in spite of the disagreement which at one time had unfortunately existed between them.

In the capital of the colony, New Amsterdam (which had begun to be built since 1796, and which supplanted a town of a similar name a little further up the river), the occasions of strife and discord were numerous and frequent between the inhabitants and the executive; indeed, from some cause or other, the affairs of Berbice were too often complicated with bickerings and animosity, and the dissensions between the officials and civilians have been repeated and violent.

About this period, the town had resumed an air of prosperity and rising importance; there were several fine buildings, the old court-house especially, which, together with the lively and clean private houses, prettily

surrounded by lovely tropical fruit-trees and shrubs, presented an aspect of striking beauty to the visitor.

After the retirement of General James Montgomery, William Woodley, Esq., arrived from England with his commission as lieutenant-governor, and was sworn into office in March, 1809; there was nothing of any public importance during his short administration. Quiet and unassuming, and a stranger to the habits and customs of the colony, he took no prominent part in interfering or altering the ordinary routine of business. About nine months after his arrival he was unfortunately attacked with a fever, of which he died in January, 1810.

He was succeeded in the government by the senior military officer, Major-General Dalrymple, who was sworn into office in the same month, and continued as acting-governor until December of the same year, when Robert Gordon, Esq., a resident planter of the colony, but who was in England at the time, received his commission as lieutenant-governor. This gentleman was well known in Berbice as a clever but eccentric character, and received the soubriquet of "Mad Gordon" from his fellow-colonists. He was of firm and decided character, acting with impartiality and fearlessness towards both friends and foes. Upon one occasion he suspended two of his most intimate friends, members of the Court of Policy, in consequence of some irregularity and subterfuge attempted to be practised on him in regard to their improper appropriation of some money entrusted to their care by a trust deed of a deceased party.

He quitted the colony for a short time in June, 1812, and during his absence the government was administered by Brigadier-General John Murray, who acquired for himself considerable popularity and reputation in the course of the discharge of his public duties.

On the return of Lieutenant-Governor Gordon in February, 1813, he resumed the administration, and Acting-Governor Murray was presented by the inhabitants with a complimentary address on his retirement.

It was during this year that an attempt was made by some irritated planters from Berbice to injure, if not assassinate, Mr. Van Berckel, of which an account has been already given. When information was received by the lieutenant-governor of this district of the disgraceful outrage, he took every feasible measure to discover the perpetrators of so unwarrantable a proceeding, and offered a large reward for their apprehension. It is said, that immediately after the occurrence a gentleman was actually at the dinner-table of the lieutenant-governor who, it was supposed, had been implicated in the assault, and who listened with some surprise, if not alarm, to the angry denunciations of Governor Gordon on the subject.

But the lieutenant-governor himself was not without his own annoyances in respect to his conduct, having strongly recommended a Mr. Frankland, of Berbice, to the office of President of the Courts of Justice in Demerara and Essequebo; this officer was nominated to the situation, but certain objections having been raised in respect to his character and qualification, the matter was referred to the British Government, who, in consequence, wrote a letter of reprimand to the lieutenant-governor of Berbice, which so incensed him that he forthwith resigned his office, and Major Grant was appointed as acting-governor of the colony in December, 1813. The humiliated and eccentric governor shortly after left the district, and died in one of the West India Islands.

In June, 1814, H. W. Bentinck, Esq., was nominated lieutenant-governor, and was sworn into office. It will be remembered that this officer had already administered the government of Demerara and Essequebo from

1806 to 1812, but that he had been superseded by an order from England, in consequence of his disobedience to the instructions received. On his return to Great Britain to give an account of his public conduct, he seems to have sufficiently extenuated himself, and to have obtained a return of Court favour, inasmuch as he received a new appointment nearly, if not quite, equal in rank and importance to the one of which he had been deprived. Generous, good-natured, and conciliatory, he was deficient in that sound judgment which is so requisite in the character of a colonial governor. A man of the world, and of considerable experience, he was not remarkable for intelligence or skill; actuated by the strong impulse of the moment, rather than guided by the dictates of calm deliberation, he frequently embroiled himself in disputes with the officers and subjects of his administration, and occasionally had to submit to the censure of the Government in England. Frank, familiar, and cordial in his manner, he was nevertheless rather a popular governor; and although advanced in life, and broken down in constitution, he continued for several years to conduct the affairs of Berbice with some success and satisfaction.

One of the principal evils he had, like most of the early governors, to encounter, were the irregularities and abuses practised in the judicial business of the colony. Extortion, exorbitant fees, subterfuge and deception, were prevalent among the courts which had to investigate and decide in the complicated monetary transactions arising from the frequent changes, failures, and deaths among the possessors of property. It was unfortunately too common a practice, both in Berbice and Demerara, for persons entrusted with the administration of the estates of deceased relatives or friends to enrich themselves at the expense of the widow and the

orphan, either appropriating the proceeds to their private use, or never rendering a satisfactory account of them; and it was not until the last shilling of profit had been extracted from the "Boedel," or estate, that the grasping executors or attorneys relinquished their hold of their profitable speculations. Often has a promising and solvent inheritance been handed down to the rightful possessor in an entirely unproductive condition, and involved in debt and litigation. No wonder that fortunes were often rapidly and strangely made—no wonder that colonial properties proved of little benefit to the successors of the thrifty and successful planter, and that mortgage and debt clung like millstones round the necks of the helpless female or the unprotected minor.

Dark and painful are the stories which yet circulate among the old inhabitants on this unpleasant subject. One short anecdote will suffice to point the moral of these miseries:—A gentleman, possessed of considerable property, was once imperatively called upon by the Court of Justice of Demerara to submit his accounts and vouchers of a certain lucrative "Boedel" entrusted to his care. After frequent evasive delays, he said that on such a day he would be ready to exhibit them, and with some parade and ostentation conveyed himself and his books on board his estates' schooner, to proceed to town. To the astonishment of the court he presented himself before the members without a single document, and affirmed on oath that, on coming to town, the schooner was unaccountably sunk, and that with some difficulty the crew and himself contrived to escape, but with the loss of all on board.

About the year 1819, Henry Beard, Esq., arrived from England, as President of the Court of Justice of Berbice. He endeavoured to improve the important department committed to his care, but in consequence of

some trifling disagreement with Lieutenant-Governor Bentinck, he was suspended by that officer. The matter was referred to the British Government, who thought proper to reinstate Mr. Beard, and to administer to the governor a reprimand for his unbecoming interference. In the course of the year 1820, Governor Bentinck died, to the regret of the colonists, who liked him in spite of his failings. His health had long been declining, so that the event of his decease was more or less anticipated. He was succeeded in November by Major Thistlewayte, the military officer highest in command here, and who had lately married one of the ladies of the colony. The career of the acting-governor was brief and melancholy. Not long married, and suddenly appointed in the prime of life to so lucrative a position, he was attacked with malignant fever about a month after his taking office, and died in January, 1821.

While on his death-bed he had to make arrangements for his successor; according to rule, the officer next in rank should succeed him, until the arrival of a lieutenant-governor, by appointment, from England. It so happened that at the time of his illness the officer in command was only a lieutenant, a young, wild, and inexperienced lad, evidently unfitted for such an office. The President of the Court of Justice, Mr. Beard, accordingly despatched his secretary, Mr. J. C. Campbell, to Governor Murray, of Demerara, requesting him to send a competent military officer to assume the government. Before this was completed, however, Colonel Sir John Cameron, having heard of Governor Bentinck's death in Barbadoes, proceeded quickly to Berbice to enjoy the privileges of acting-governor. On his arrival he found Major Thistlewayte dying, but without waiting for his death had the Court of Policy assembled, and was sworn into office forthwith. He did not, however, long enjoy the coveted

honours. It appears that on the death of Governor Bentinck, Mr. Beard had exerted his influence, and that of his friends at home, to procure the government for himself, and with success, for in March, 1821, he received his commission as lieutenant-governor of Berbice.

His administration was by no means popular. He had frequent disputes with his subordinates, and with the members of the Council of Policy, many of whom were also members of the Court of Justice. Upon one occasion he dissolved the former, and caused other members to be nominated in their place, which caused a great deal of excitement and indignation among a certain class of the community. The progress made in Berbice was not now equal to that of the united colonies of Demerara and Essequebo, and it was fast merging into a mere dependency of the latter. The same measures which had been adopted by the British Government, relative to the protection and amelioration of the condition of the slaves in the other colonies, were also extended to Berbice; and those steps commenced which were gradually to lead to their emancipation from bondage.

The shock occasioned by the insurrection of the slaves in Demerara in 1823, was communicated to Berbice, but no display of dissatisfaction was manifested by the negroes in the latter district, nor any attempt made by them to co-operate in the revolt. It had been too quickly suppressed to allow of the hope of success to enter into the bosoms of the others, and the result only acted as a warning to keep them in good behaviour.

On Lieutenant-Governor Beard's quitting the colony, on leave of absence, in March, 1825, it was no longer deemed necessary to appoint a separate acting-governor; the direction of its affairs was entrusted to Sir Benjamin D'Urban, at that time lieutenant-governor of Demerara and Essequebo, who continued to act until the return of

Mr. Beard, in July, 1826. The last years of this gentleman's administration were not more encouraging than the earlier period of his career. He pulled down the venerable court-house, so long the pride and ornament of New Amsterdam, to the great scandal and mortification of the inhabitants, and otherwise acted in a manner anything but satisfactory to the colonists. He continued, however, to hold his situation until 1831, when the union of the three colonies, and the appointment of one governor, rendered his services unnecessary. He soon afterwards quitted Berbice, and returned to England, at the close of an eventful and profitable career in the West Indies.

The union of the three colonies, now known as British Guiana, was followed by many important results. On the 21st of July, 1831, the governor exhibited to the Honourable the Court of Policy the commission granted to him by his Majesty as Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of British Guiana, comprising the colonies of Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice, and their dependencies; and on the 5th of August following, a similar commission was granted to him as Vice-Admiral of the same colony; which appointments were duly acknowledged and proclaimed. The Court of Policy of Georgetown now became the Court of Policy for the three districts, and its first ordinary session was held on the 25th day of July of the same year. In the same manner one College of Electors, or Keizers, and one College of Financial Representatives, existed for the whole colony, members from each district being of course qualified for election.* But the form of the courts of criminal and civil justice were completely altered by proclamation, and circuit courts established for British Guiana as well

* The College of Keizers and Financial Representatives were incorporated in one body in 1812, by Governor Carmichael, but by a proclamation of Sir B. D'Urban, dated 21st July, 1831, the two colleges were again made distinct.

as for the neighbouring colonies of Trinidad and St. Lucia, the civil courts to be held before a chief justice and two puisne judges. However, on November 22nd of the same year the circuit courts were abolished, and a chief justice and two puisne judges were appointed for British Guiana, before whom, also, all civil causes were to be heard. The criminal court was to be held by the same chief justice and puisne judges, but associated with three assessors. In criminal cases, a majority of the whole court was required to ensure conviction. The former president of the court, Mr. Wray, was appointed to the high office of chief justice. A "manner of proceeding" was accordingly published, to be observed in the supreme courts of civil justice in British Guiana, respecting the period and date of the sessions; the establishment of roll courts; the serving of citation; the renewal of sentences; the manner of proceeding concerning bills of exchange; the taxation of costs; summation and services; the sale of movable property; the levy upon and sale of immovable property; the appointment of sequestrators; the sale of plantations; the obligations of purchasers; and position of creditors and mortgagees. An ordinance, the same year, was also passed, providing for a sufficient number of assessors for the court of criminal justice.

It must be remembered that there was one supreme court of criminal justice of Demerara and Essequebo, and one for Berbice, and the same obtained in the civil courts. To the former, twelve assessors were appointed by this ordinance for each court of criminal justice in Demerara and Berbice. The right to elect them lay with the College of Keizers, and rules for their appearance and conduct were enacted. It is also to be remarked that the College of Keizers and of Financial Representatives, which, as before stated, had been strangely united by a previous governor (General Carmichael), were in July of the year 1831 again separated by a proclamation

of Governor D'Urban, who had received orders to that effect from Great Britain.

In the following year, 1832, other important orders and judicial enactments came into operation; as early as January the consolidated slave ordinance, already alluded to, was published. It provided, as we have seen, for the still greater amelioration in the condition of the slave, reducing the period of labour to nine hours; and for children under four years of age and pregnant women to six hours; it increased the allowances; and reduced the extent of punishment to fifteen lashes. As a matter of course the colonial members of the Court of Policy made strenuous exertions to prevent the enforcement of this ordinance. In a printed document on the subject, addressed to the governor, they say: "From the nature of this order in Council, we are impressed with a firm conviction that, if such a publication does take place, the utter ruin and desolation of this colony, already suffering under the severest calamities, will be consummated." Unable to prevent its operation, they were still more opposed to its publication, fearful of the injurious tendency it would have on their privileges, and of the insolence and exultation to which it would most likely give rise on the part of the slave. In February of this year, a curious proclamation made its appearance, abrogating the offence of "eating dirt;" a propensity and practice which the negro had acquired, and for which he was rendered liable to punishment. It being now perceived that such a habit was in itself a disease, the punishment died away with the cure of the malady. In March following appeared an ordinance "to define offences committed by slaves," and to establish a "summary jurisdiction for the punishment thereof;" which summary jurisdiction was entrusted to fiscals, deputy-fiscals, or civil magistrates.

In September of the same year (1832) an ordinance

was passed "to establish and constitute inferior courts of civil justice in British Guiana," and to make other provisions for the establishment of such inferior courts. This ordinance repealed a previous one of May the same year, and enacted one inferior court for the district of Demerara and Essequebo, and another for the district of Berbice, to be held by and before the chief justice, or one of the puisne judges, at appointed times; to have jurisdiction in cases of the amount or value of twenty pounds sterling (20*l.*) or 300 guilders currency, &c. An amended ordinance for the providing of assessors was also enacted in August of this year, in which two clauses were altered, requiring in future that assessors should be liable to serve for two years, and to be subject to fines in case of non-attendance; but these ordinances were again superseded by others. Again, "a capitation tax," similar to what was raised in Demerara and Essequebo, to aid the king's chest in providing for the salaries of the public functionaries of British Guiana, was also enforced, by ordinance of the governor and Court of Policy, to extend to the district of Berbice.

In addition to the foregoing ordinances of the year 1838, an enactment was passed by Sir Benjamin D'Urban and Court of Policy, on the 25th August, to establish boards of health in the districts of Demerara and Essequebo, and of Berbice, in the colony of British Guiana.

The following table shows the ratio of mortality among the negro slave population in these colonies:

Colonies.	Period over which the Average has been taken.	Average Population.			Average Yearly Deaths.			Annual Deaths to 1000 living.			Annual Deaths to Total Population.
		M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Both Sexes.	
Demerara and Essequebo	1826 to 1832	37,949	32,475	70,424	1299	826	2125	34	25	30	1 in 33
Berbice	1819 to 1831	12,029	10,093	22,122	393	295	688	33	29	31	1 in 32

Such were some of the principal changes and occurrences which marked the government of Sir Benjamin D'Urban; and whether we consider the general utility of the measures enforced, or the skill with which they were directed, we cannot but admit that the conduct of the governor was both vigorous and effective.

Possessed of the most gentleman-like and affable demeanour, his excellency was characterised by high intelligence and soldier-like decision. To the agreeable and hospitable behaviour of himself and Lady D'Urban the society of the colony was largely indebted, and not a little improved. The governor had his favourites (how few have not?), but it was generally admitted that he acted towards all with becoming impartiality and strict justice. After about seven years of useful administration, during which he lost his eldest son (Captain D'Urban, who was unfortunately drowned whilst bathing up the Essequebo), he retired for ever from these shores, universally regretted, but only to receive subsequently from his sovereign a higher and more important command.

CHAPTER XII.

ARRIVAL OF LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR SIR J. C. SMYTH, BART.—STATE OF COLONY—PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT—ACT OF APPRENTICESHIP, OCT. 19, 1833—INFERIOR CRIMINAL COURTS ESTABLISHED—REMARKS ON THE POLICY OF GREAT BRITAIN—IMMEDIATE EFFECTS OF THE NEW ACT—MUTINOUS ASSEMBLAGE OF NEGROES—MEASURES OF THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR TO CHECK THE INSUBORDINATION—DISPERSION OF MOB—TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF THE RING-LEADER — ITS PRACTICAL RESULT — FEELING AGAINST THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR—NEWSPAPER ABUSE—DOMESTIC HABITS OF THE NEGRO—THE COMPENSATION MONEY—ITS DISTRIBUTION, APPROPRIATION, AND USE—REMARKS ON THE FREE-COLOURED PEOPLE—DECREASE OF POPULATION, AND ITS CAUSES—FORMATION OF THE CIVIL LIST—RETIREMENT OF CHIEF JUSTICE WRAY—HIS CHARACTER—ARRIVAL OF CHIEF JUSTICE BENT—PARTY SPIRIT—NEWSPAPER OUTRAGE ON THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR—HIS REMARKS ON THE SUBJECT—ESTABLISHMENT OF MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL, 1837—TITLE OF GOVERNOR BESTOWED ON SIR J. C. SMYTH—ELECTIVE FRANCHISE OF 1838—DEATH OF THE GOVERNOR—REMARKS ON HIS CHARACTER.

THE opening of 1833 was a crisis of extraordinary interest and peculiar difficulty in the history of the colony. The changes already effected in the condition of the slave and of society generally, and the still more important changes which were in contemplation, demanded the utmost firmness and discretion on the part of the Executive in dealing with the indignant remonstrances of the planters, and the excited anticipations of the slave. A rare combination of patience and resolution alone could have maintained the ascendancy of legitimate authority, and curbed the passions of the antagonistic classes at a

moment so fraught with danger to the community. Such qualities were fortunately united in the person of Sir James Carmichael Smyth, who in the year 1833 arrived in the colony, and assumed the government. The difficulties of his position were very great. The circumstances against which he had to contend were novel and alarming. He found a large body of slaves emerged from a state of barbarism and ignorance into the condition of vassals; exhibiting in their character and conduct a strange mixture of civilisation and ignorance; of imperfect morals and scanty notions of religion grafted on native superstition; of outward humility and obsequiousness masking secret feelings of fear and detestation. He found them occupied in toil, but enjoying all the physical comforts of an European peasantry; surrounded with the blessings of improved laws, and an abundance of the necessaries of life. But notwithstanding all these advantages, he discovered discontent and uneasiness beneath the surface, and a perpetual restlessness and feverish desire for a change, which seemed incompatible with their actual worldly prosperity. The cause was evident; the slave felt himself on the verge of emancipation, and was impatient to clear at a bound the chasm which separated him from liberty.

On the other hand, the new governor had to encounter a body of the colonists who were at variance with the Executive upon this subject. Naturally anxious, and desponding at the approaching changes, they were not likely to surrender without a struggle the privileges they had hitherto exercised with impunity. They were to see their means of acquiring wealth wrested from them in what appeared an unjust and arbitrary manner. They felt themselves about to be triumphed over by the very class that had before always trembled at their nod. They saw the country which had been raised by them, and by

their fathers, to its then state of prosperity,* about to be torn by intestine commotion and factious innovations. They felt, not altogether unreasonably, that a strict line of equality was now about to level the distinctions of society, and that, whilst in all probability they and their children would have to descend in position, the negro and his race would rise in the scale of power and social consideration. Nor were they to be comforted by British philanthropists who expatiated upon the justice and wisdom of the scheme, and who prophesied that it would tend rather to augment than to diminish the welfare and progress of the colony. There were not, indeed, wanting many of the colonists whose humanity induced them to approve in the abstract of the contemplated emancipation; but few or none pretended to deny that it involved great sacrifices, and that it threatened the existence and stability of the country.

The first act of Sir James C. Smyth was to issue a proclamation to the slaves respecting the measures in progress for their benefit. Nothing could have been more judicious or politic than this act. It at once satisfied curiosity and restrained impatience, while it afforded to the colonists and to the negroes a candid proof of the earnestness and zeal with which the governor was about to rule. The former adopted their old and generally successful custom of endeavouring to secure the favour of his Majesty's representative to their side. Unbounded offers of hospitality and support were tendered to him, but he received them coldly and with suspicion. Advice and complaint poured in upon him, and he was alternately menaced with opposition and unpopularity, and tempted by flattery, but to no purpose. Displaying an impartiality which rendered hopeless all attempts to intimidate or

* The estimated value of Demerara and Essequebo, just before the slave emancipation, was 18,410,480*l.*, while that of Berbice was 7,415,160*l.* Total value of British Guiana, 25,825,640*l.*—MONTGOMERY MARTIN.

entrap his judgment, and resolved to be guided by the interests and not by the passions of the conflicting classes, the colonists soon discovered the inutility of attempting to influence his course, and at last ceased to regard him in any other light than that of a severe, but strictly just administrator. While his manner to the planter and merchant was thus cold, studied, and polite, his demeanour to the negro was dignified, courteous, and considerate. Conscious of the difficulty of his position, he carefully avoided encouraging the approaches of either, formed few friendships, and dispensed justice equally to all. We shall soon see how such an act was met and regarded by the individuals of each party. On the 12th June, 1833, the following resolutions passed the House of Commons:—That "Immediate and effectual measures be taken for the entire abolition of slavery throughout the colonies, under such provisions for regulating the condition of the negroes as may combine their welfare with the interests of the proprietors." Lord Wynford, in 1833, proposed a bill for the purpose of preventing the introduction of *any* produce from places where slavery prevailed, but it was never sanctioned.

On the 19th October, "the Act of Apprenticeship" passed by the British Parliament. A proclamation immediately announced this important measure to the colony. It was entitled, "An Act for the Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Colonies, for promoting the industry of the manumitted slaves, and for compensating the persons hitherto entitled to the services of such slaves.*

* As the provisions of this act bear immediately upon the text, an abstract of its clauses is given here rather than in the Appendix, for the convenience of reference.

ABSTRACT OF THE ACT OF APPRENTICESHIP.

1. All persons on the 1st August, 1834, being registered as slaves, six years old and upwards, shall become apprentice labourers.
2. All apprenticed labourers to continue to serve their former masters.

In January, 1834, an ordinance was passed to establish inferior criminal courts of justice. Among other pro-

3. All slaves free when brought to Great Britain.
4. Three classes of apprentices: namely, 1st, labourers, or prædial attached on owner's lands; 2nd, prædials unattached, or those not on owner's lands; and 3rd, non-prædial, such as tradesmen and other artisans.
5. Apprenticeship of prædial labourers to 1st August, 1840.
6. Apprenticeship of non-prædial labourers to 1st August, 1838.
7. Labourers voluntarily discharged after this act were required to be supported by their late employers, if aged or infirm.
8. Apprenticed labourers allowed to purchase their discharge.
9. Apprenticed labourers not removable from the colony; prædial labourers not removable from plantation, except with consent of two special justices.
10. Right to service of apprenticed labourer to be transported property.
11. Employer to supply labourer with food, &c.
12. Subject to the above obligation. Slavery was to be abolished in 1834.
13. Rules about indenturing children below six years in 1834, and those born after.
14. Justices of peace, by special commission, required to give effect to this act, &c.
15. Salaries granted to them by his Majesty.
16. Recital of regulation necessary for giving effect to this act, and the mode of treating and classing the labourers.
17. Whipping on the authority of the employer abolished.
18. Colonial acts not to interfere with appointment of special justice.
19. Special justices to exercise exclusive jurisdiction between employers and apprenticed labourers.
20. Apprenticed labourers not to be subjected to renewal of apprenticeship, nor to more than fifteen hours' extra labour in any week for employer's benefit.
21. Apprenticed labourers not to be made to work on Sundays, or prevented from attending religious worship.
22. Not to interfere with colonial laws relative to apprenticed labourers being exempted from, or disqualified for, certain militia or civil services and franchise.
23. Local acts amending this act to supersede it, if confirmed by his Majesty.
24. Treasury to raise loan, not to exceed twenty millions.
25. Treasury to give notice of their intention to raise the same, &c.
26. Annuities to be granted for such loans to be the same as some now existing.
27. Annuities created by this act subject to same rules as those now existing.
28. Commissioners for reduction of the National Debt may subscribe towards raising the twenty millions. Moneys raised to be paid to the bank.
29. West Indian compensation account.
30. Cashiers of bank to give receipts for subscription, &c.
31. Interest and charges of twenty millions to be charged upon Consolidated Fund.
32. Money for paying annuities to be issued by exchequer to cashier of the bank.
33. Commissioners to be appointed to distribute the compensation provided for by this act.
34. Oath of commissioners.
35. Meetings of commissioners. Appointment of inferior officers also to be sworn.
36. Any three commissioners to be a quorum.
37. Remuneration of some of the commissioners.
38. Colonial or auxiliary commissioners appointed.
39. Issue of money for payment of the expenses of the commission.
40. Commissioners may compel attendance and examination of witnesses.
41. Commissioners to take examinations on oath.

visions it abolished the use of the whip, which was now forbidden, except by sentence of a magistrate. Another ordinance was also passed for carrying the Act of Apprenticeship into effect; and on the 1st August, 1834, the sun rose in splendour, and cast its effulgence over a land inhabited alone by free men. The dark reign of Slavery had vanished with the passed night, never to return. Mountain and valley, ocean and river, the wildest waste and the most cultivated territory of the British West Indies no longer bore testimony to the ignominy of man's degradation, but offered their inexhaustible riches to the free arm which should be willing and industrious enough to seek them. Never had the recording pen of the historian a more grateful task to perform than to trace the era of this glorious victory over

42. Penalties for swearing falsely.
43. Exemption from postage of letters on commission business.
44. No compensation allowed to any colony, unless such colony fulfil nature of the act.
45. Compensation fund divided into nineteen shares for each of the colonies—Bermuda, Bahamas, Jamaica, Honduras, Virgin Isles, Antigua, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Christopher, Dominica, Barbadoes, Grenada, St. Vincent, Tobago, St. Lucia, Trinidad, British Guiana, Good Hope, Mauritia.
46. No compensation allowed for persons illegally held as slaves.
47. Commissioners to institute inquiries, and to adopt rules assigning equal shares of the compensation fund.
48. Rules to be published in the *London Gazette*, and appeals against them allowed.
49. Such appeals to be considered by his Majesty.
50. In the absence of appeal, his Majesty and Council may amend such rules.
51. Rules, when confirmed, shall be enrolled in Chancery.
52. Such recorded rules may be amended.
53. Confirmed rules valid, as if enacted by Parliament.
54. Rules so enrolled to be observed by commissioners.
55. Interested persons to prefer claim before commissioners.
56. Commissioners to adjudicate claims; appeals allowed.
57. His Majesty in Council may consider such appeals.
58. Failing appeals, the award to be considered final.
59. Treasury may order payment of salaries.
60. Manner in which sums awarded by law to be paid.
61. Certain British statutes extended to colonies, and power of special justices defined.
62. His Majesty in Council may make laws for giving effect to this act in Honduras.
63. Word "governor" defined.
64. Act not to extend to East Indies.
65. When act to come into effect at Good Hope and Mauritia.
66. Island dependent upon colonies deemed part of such.

a vicious principle,—the confession to a world of a nation's sin,—a frank avowal of wrong and injustice on the part of a powerful empire to the poor and abject slave,—a voluntary act of self-sacrifice and contrition on the part of a haughty and lordly master to the servant who for years had obeyed him in awe and degradation. The act on the part of England was an act of pure magnanimity—an example to a world of a great country's sense of wrong—an example to her own people of her sense of justice. The concession was voluntary; it was neither extorted by threats, nor founded upon sordid calculations of profit. The glory still remains to her of having made a sacrifice to principle, which France alone, of all the nations of Europe, has had the grace to imitate and adopt.

Let us now see what was the immediate effect of the "apprenticeship." The hour had long been watched for by the slaves; behold it now arrived! How did he acknowledge it? Universal rejoicing commemorated the day. The churches were opened, and hundreds flocked to its altars to offer up a prayer of thanksgiving and praise. The militia and troops formed a procession in the most public places, where a proclamation and address was read by his excellency, in presence of a multitude of persons, and surrounded by a brilliant staff of officers, both civil and military. The negroes, dressed out in their gayest apparel, paraded the streets and roads. Many strolled from house to house, listening to and bearing the glad tidings. In that one hour seemed buried all the sorrows and forgotten all the indignities of slavery. The general bearing of the inhabitants was on the whole creditable and moderate; no disposition of ill-will or revenge was exhibited. Many an imprudent speech was uttered indeed; many a witty joke cracked at the expense of "Massa Buckra;" what of that, it was a cheap

and innocent return for many an act of oppression and injustice. The characteristic good-humour of the negro triumphed over his resentments in the moment of new-born hilarious liberty; he forgot his enmity in his fun, and the smile and the laugh were rather to be detected in his dark features than any expression of malice or hatred. But many social habits were cast off. The ties of years were broken in that one day. Old servants and dependents abruptly left their masters. It was difficult to get work done. Carousings, revellings, and public balls got up among the negroes, marked their rejoicings. The town itself was like a hive swarming with inhabitants. From all parts of the country they flocked to the metropolis, and that movement so simple, so natural in itself, established a principle which was injurious to the more remote districts. No act of violence, however, accompanied the presence of the crowds in the town; no riotous scenes or dissolute behaviour followed. Even the discomfited planter could not but outwardly acquiesce in the joy around him; the cheerfulness of the scene was contagious, and he who dated from this hour loss of fortune and ascendancy could not help catching the infection. The slave of yesterday was revelling in the anticipation of a life of freedom. As yet it possessed all the charms of an ideal and untried existence. Like children who have a holiday granted to them, they looked forward with pleasure to the enjoyment of it, but had not yet decided in their minds how they should spend it. What a startling fact remained then to be told. What a recoil followed the announcement of the Act of Apprenticeship. Apprenticeship! Still servitude. They had yet to linger out a few years of articled toil ere they could become free agents; in fact, their own masters. The division into prædials and non-prædials was a hard lesson for them to learn.

The wisdom of such an arrangement was questionable. Its intention was undoubtedly good; it had for its object the gradual adjustment of the relations between master and servant in their new positions, but, strange to say, it pleased neither. The former, denuded of his authority, was at a loss how to treat his dependent, while the latter felt as if he had been in part cheated of the promised boon; hence arose frequent misunderstandings. It is difficult even now to say what would have been the most satisfactory and politic step in bringing about the emancipation for the benefit of all parties. It was then thought hazardous to convert in one day nearly a million of slaves into free subjects. By some it was considered unnecessary to enlighten or instruct them more fully in their required duties. Some proposed to establish a species of feoffage; the Crown to take formal possession of all the land, and to grant land under a tenure, exacting the performance of certain services to the sovereign. In lieu of service, the Crown was to exact annually the payment of a sum of money, regulated in amount in proportion to the disparity between the ordinary cost of a man's subsistence and the value of his labour. To correct thus the evils of habitual idleness of such as were desirous of obtaining liberty, until the time when artificial wants should be introduced, and sufficient inducement created to incite men to exertion. To appropriate such money in promoting the improvement and education of the rising generation. To establish a vagrant law, and to institute punishments for idleness and dereliction of prescribed duties. To form the mechanics and tradesmen into companies. To invite those already free to become freeholders of property, or to learn trades. Such measures having a general tendency to bring about a gradual liberty, to keep up the spirit of agriculture and commerce by industry and incentives to labour, and to

be well adapted to the wishes and prosperity of all, and to the maintenance of the success of the colonies in their integrity, &c. &c. Others, again, suggested an immediate and unrestricted abolition of slavery; and perhaps, after all, this, the boldest of the propositions, would have been the best.

The people of England, who in reality understood little of the actual condition and capacity of the slaves, but who clamoured for abolition, cared little how it was effected, so that it was actually accomplished. Exaggerated and often untrue stories had reached their ears, and they were intent on some alteration of the system. It would have been a matter of astonishment, perhaps of indifference to the majority, if the colonies were to be irrevocably ruined, or the planters annihilated; but to the Legislature of Great Britain it was a matter of deep concern how best to introduce the desired freedom. The Act of Apprenticeship was the result of this deliberation. To have been more politic and just it should not have alone provided indemnification for the actual deprivation of the services of the negroes, who had been collected at an enormous outlay, but it should also have contemplated the failure of manual labour likely to result, and provided measures to keep up a proper supply of labour adequate to the wants of the colonies. The planters were, it is true, to be compensated for the loss of their live stock in trade, but no attention was paid to the loss that would probably ensue to the capital invested in buildings, machinery, and other works, when the moving power was withdrawn, as it would be by the retirement of the labourers from such properties.

Had it not been that this colony was too closely connected with Europe in monetary transactions, and that large capitalists were concerned in its existence, there can be no doubt but that ere long it would have reverted

to its former luxuriant but uncultivated waste, save, perhaps, the scanty culture necessary for the wants of a semi-barbarous state of society. The scheme, however, now offered, although with the best intentions, was found injudicious, unsatisfactory, and impracticable. The idea was too complicated for the mind of the negro. It deprived him, in his own eyes, of half his expected glory. It left him, as it found him, desponding and dissatisfied. It excited him for a moment, but to depress him afterwards. It shook off, it is true, the shackles of iron which had previously bound him, but it still fettered him with restrictions. The very distinction that was drawn between prædials and non-prædials was irksome to reflect upon. If (so argued the negro), as was stated, one human being was as good as another, and that all men were equal, and should be free, why begin again to form new distinctions? They had been told that they were worthy to rank with the noblest of God's creation. They had been made men, and why were they now to be treated as children? It cast suspicion upon the noble gift which had been presented to them. The tear of gratitude was checked as it was about to flow; the hand paralysed as it was about to be clasped in thankfulness. The intelligence of the negro could not as yet perceive that the mind had been emancipated, although the body had yet to toil. It could not yet appreciate the delicate sense of consideration shown to the injured planter, but it was quick enough to resent as an insult that which was considered as a reflection upon their capacity of freedom. They thought only of themselves as most men do when placed in similar critical situations. They felt that their triumph was incomplete when any consideration was shown for the upper classes, which had been so long opposed to them. But, as will be seen, the good effect intended for the planter proved abortive, and the whole

scheme failed in its object to satisfy, and in its desire to be just.

Scarcely had the last sounds of revelry and merriment ceased which marked the 1st of August, 1834, when an unwillingness to submit to the published Act of the Apprenticeship betrayed itself throughout the greater part of the colony, but more especially along the west coast of Essequebo, known as the Arabian coast, long deemed the garden of the country, from its opulence and beauty. It was here that proceeded the loudest complaints against the acts from England. A large number of labourers refused to work under the new regulations. In fact, "a strike" occurred, and the feelings which prompted to this were such as have just been described. Freedom was not considered freedom, if it imposed restrictions, obligations, duties. How untutored was still the negro mind! how unconscious of the powerful restraints which a civilised community impose upon its members of every class! How blind as yet not to perceive that the very fact which confers liberty upon each individual is the regulation of the conduct of all by certain general and well-understood laws!

Seven or eight hundred of the dissatisfied labourers collected in a churchyard in the parish of Trinity, where they hoisted a flag, insisted that the king had made them free, and, when ordered to disperse, refused. Several ringleaders, one more especially, directed the disorderly mass. But no violence was attempted; they were armed with arguments and words, perhaps a few bludgeons, but nothing more. Beyond hustling a man whom they mistook for a constable out of the churchyard, they hurt no one. The effect of such an example might have been, however, very serious. It naturally enough excited the greatest alarm throughout the colony. A repetition of the scenes of 1823 was anticipated. The planters and

their supporters pointed significantly to the occurrence as a confirmation of their prophecies. The opposite party were disturbed and irresolute. The former called loudly upon the governor to proclaim "martial law." The latter awaited his determination with anxiety. Sir James Smyth, unmoved by the suggestions of the colonists, sent down a detachment of soldiers to the disaffected coast, and proceeded thither himself, when he admonished the people, informed them of their error, and ordered them to disperse, which they accordingly did. The labourers truly considered him their friend, and found him so. The planters regarded him as a tyrant, but found safety under his administration. The promptness, moderation, and judgment exhibited by his excellency upon this occasion merit the highest praise. A similar line of conduct pursued consistently, might upon a previous occasion have modified, if not altogether prevented, the insurrection of 1823.

But the band of dissatisfied labourers were not dismissed quietly to their homes. Many of the most active in the "strike" were taken prisoners and sent to Georgetown, there to await a trial. After a lengthened and deliberate inquiry, during which the colony was in a state of fermentation, one of the prisoners, Damon, was sentenced to death by the court, four others to transportation, and thirty-one to imprisonment and whipping; a tolerably large proportion, considering the number implicated. One of the puisne judges, Mr. Willis, protested against these proceedings; but the chief justice, Mr. Wray, held that the hoisting of a flag, although by persons unarmed, constituted an act of rebellion, of which all were guilty, although by the Dutch law some might be punished more, and others less. This decision of the court appears, at the present time, somewhat arbitrary and severe; but taking into consideration the perilous

change which had just been effected, in fact scarcely effected, reflecting on the excited minds of the populace, and the consequences which in all probability would have resulted, had not an example been made at first of those venturing thus openly to resist the law, there can be no doubt that the stern justice of such a step was correct. It is always painful to listen to the condemnation to death. It is always fearful to witness its execution; but the remedy which acts most powerfully is often the best; the knife which cuts the deepest the most serviceable. Who could have witnessed the sad preparations made for the destruction of a misguided individual in open day—who could have dwelt upon his fate without pain? Who could have known the tumultuous state of feeling among all parties at this eventful epoch, the indignant sorrow of the negro, the commiserating sympathy of the upper classes, without being made to feel the greatness of the sacrifice? Who could have seen the crowded multitude which gathered at the foot of the scaffold, in front of the public buildings, the solemn procession, the array of officials and troops, and last, not least, the victim that was about to be offered up to the justice of an earthly court, only to be arraigned before a higher tribunal? Who could have seen all this, and the body, in a moment after, a lifeless corpse, and not have hoped—devoutly hoped—that the last crime of slavery had been perpetrated? It was so, in fact; the death of Damon was the last homicide committed in the British West Indies in defence of the system of slavery. Who can tell how many a life has been spared by that one expiation of guilt! Sad though it was, it tended to reassure the planter, to explain to the negro, more than a volume of ordinances could have done, the real nature of his position. Its efficacy has been tested by experience; its truth verified by the result. The same dis-

position which had demonstrated itself among the labourers on the Arabian coast, was also shown on most of the other estates of the colony (Berbice excepted); but beyond occasional cavillings and a temporary cessation of labour, nothing serious resulted. The recent strike among the labourers was not readily forgotten or forgiven by the planters; they complained of the leniency of the governor's conduct towards the rest of the prisoners. Of these, the four who were to be transported were, after a short confinement, set at liberty, and the remaining thirty-one pardoned at once by his excellency. This circumstance evinced a desire not to execute vengeance; but having made one terrible example of the consequences of insubordination, the others were restored to society, to carry back to their friends the tale of their escape, and the sad fate of their companion. They had been sufficiently taught what would be the result of future misconduct. But the majority of the colonists were far from being satisfied by these late proceedings. Led on by some of the leading men in the community who were opposed to the governor, and having their cause advocated in a powerfully-written but scurrilous newspaper, the *Guiana Chronicle*, fierce attacks were made against his excellency. Personal invectives and taunting reproaches filled the columns of the paper. He was accused of partiality, cowardice, treachery. The principal source of annoyance seemed to be the refusal of his excellency to proclaim martial law when the strike occurred. This was construed into a negligent affront and insult. Stimulated by the approbation of the majority of the colonists, intoxicated by popularity, and goaded by the cool indifference of the governor, this paper proceeded to such lengths, that ultimately a suit for libel was brought by him against the publication. This action, however, failed, chiefly in consequence of

the governor's own conduct relative to the "freedom of the press." It so happened that the year before, in a militia "general order," dated December 31, 1833, in reference to a sentence of a court-martial which had become the subject of newspaper discussion, Sir James Carmichael Smyth had observed:

"The commander-in-chief cannot conclude this order without remarking that, generally speaking, too much value appears to be attached by respectable individuals in this colony to what may be said for or against them in the newspapers. It is certainly pleasanter to be praised than abused; and, in a small community, it can hardly be expected that the same indifference on these subjects should exist as is to be met with in England. Public men cannot, however, expect that even the very wisest and ablest of their measures will meet with universal approbation. A free and public decision of all public measures is a great public good, and frequently does more to remove prejudices, to correct errors, and to point out the proper mode of proceeding, than any other invention of human wisdom. In the attainment of a great good, we must submit to a partial evil. Controversial writers too frequently confound a public man with the measures he advocates; and, in abusing the latter, the individual himself is occasionally a little bespattered. Public men must, however, expect these things; and they find their reward in the consciousness of having done their duty, in the respect and esteem of their friends; and, lastly, in the gratitude of the public themselves, who, although they may be misled for a time, yet rarely in the end fail to appreciate the merits of every man according to his real worth."

Such was the expressed opinion of the governor upon the subject of newspaper abuse the year before he himself instituted a suit against a scurrilous publication; but

there is a limit to forbearance. Great was the excitement of the popular mind; vigorous the efforts made to resist the "libel suit." It was looked upon as a national cause. The salvation of every one seemed to depend upon the issue; and when the action failed, as we have said, on the ground that the governor "had recognised the freedom of the press, and given encouragement to strictures on public affairs," the joy and triumph of the colonists was great. A victory had been acquired for them; henceforward they might abuse the Executive at their leisure and with impunity. The proprietors of the *Guiana Chronicle* received by subscription a present of 3000 dollars, about 600*l.*, and the able lawyer who defended the suit, a piece of plate of the value of 250 guineas.

But the triumph of the colonists was not yet complete; the exhibition of ill-will not yet expended. A petition was prepared and forwarded to the king, signed by almost the whole body of the colonists, praying for the removal of Sir James C. Smyth from the government of the colony. This document was published by the governor's orders, with a list of the names of the petitioners. The manner in which the signatures were procured was a proof at once of the inattention with which persons regarded such a deed, and of the zeal with which his opponents sought to overwhelm him. Papers were carried through the town and country to every individual who could write, to attach his signature. There were very few who signed that document but lived afterwards to be ashamed of it, and to regret it.*

* There is something singular in the change that future years effected. A monument, the work of Sir F. Chantrey, erected by the colonists, and dedicated to the memory of Sir J. C. Smyth, stands conspicuously in the cathedral of the city of Georgetown; whilst the proprietors of the paper, and the editor who wrote for it, have sank in society, and made good the prophecy in Sir J. C. Smyth's militia order of 1833.

The conduct of the negroes after the late events was also a matter of anxiety to the governor. He had shown some confidence in them, and had hoped to see it productive of gratitude and respect. The labourers, compelled by the regulations to remain on the properties where they were originally attached, evinced the greatest desire in most instances to quit their employers, in the hope of meeting with others more agreeable or advantageous: the novelty of a change was the chief temptation. But the older negroes returned afterwards to their old haunts, unmindful of change or circumstance. A great many of the women, who before had been compelled to work, gave up by degrees the labour of the field, and occupied themselves more in the duties of their household. Let us see the nature of that household. The negro, with all his civilisation, had not advanced much in domestic improvement; they resembled in this respect the French more than any other nation; they spent their means on dress, or wasted it in trifles, but rarely thought of adding comfort to their homes, or expending it in the wants of the hearth. A wooden bench or two did the office of chairs. A common table was covered in most singular confusion with glasses, plates, cups, earthenware mugs, saucepans, and the universal "calabash" (a useful bowl, formed of a species of goard, which grows commonly throughout the country); this latter is a most valuable appendage to the *ménage* of a negro. It serves him to wash in, to hold water, to contain food for himself, wife, or children, to drink out of, &c. On the floor, formed very often of the hardened earth, lay one or more wooden trays (another household god of the negro). The tray seemed nearly for as many purposes as the calabash. They carried vegetables for sale in it; they brought it home balanced on the head, filled with plantains or fish, and other food; when it got

home, it became a receptacle for dirty or clean clothes, or was converted into a cradle, which contained the infant of the establishment, of which there was sure to be one, if not more. The infant so placed on the floor was considered quite safe; it was true, that a stray goat or dog, or the neighbour's fowls, might constantly be treading on him; but that was nothing, considering he was so comfortably "cribbed, cabined, and confined." But the tray had other uses; in wet weather it served as an umbrella; in hot weather as a "parasol." The negro, with his calabash and tray, thought himself well off, and envied not "Diogenes his tub." Another article of domestic use was a large block of wood, scooped out at one end like a mortar, which in fact it was, the use to which it was applied being that of pounding of plantains into a pasty mass, which, under the euphonious name of "fou fou," was (and is still) regarded as the manna of the country. The wooden pestle used in the process is five or six feet long, and the whole preparation laborious and fatiguing; but nothing proves too troublesome so long as the "fou fou" is forthcoming, a large lump of which is allotted separately to father, mother, and children, till its proportions are visibly affected and their appetites appeased. By way of bed, a mattress of dried palm-leaves, a coarse flannel, or a grass hammock,* answered every purpose. Such was the household over which the lady of the family had to preside. It certainly did not require very great superintendence; but little as there was to do, it was seldom that anything like order or cleanliness was met with. This description, applying to those labourers living on estates, holds good to the present day; for although by degrees the love of more expensive and useful articles, such as bedsteads, chairs, &c., began to be

* B. Edwards, reasoning on the word hammock, thinks it derived from the Caribbean language. Bolingbroke from the Dutch "Hang-mat."

felt, it is remarkable to witness the want of order and taste which obtains in a labourer's cottage. There may be finery, there may be extravagance, but there is rarely anything like neatness or comfort.

Another important circumstance connected with the emancipation of the slaves is deserving of notice in this place. The British nation, in contemplating the loss which would result to the owners of slaves when deprived of their services by the gift of liberty, had provided the munificent sum of 20,000,000*l.*, to be awarded as "compensation money" throughout the West Indies. Twenty millions of pounds were to be divided among the numerous claimants who should put forward and substantiate their claims—a task of no little difficulty and labour. The number of slaves for whom compensation was claimed in British Guiana was 82,824, as follows:—Prædial attached, 57,807; prædial not attached, 5475; non-prædial, 6297; total for whom compensation was awarded, 69,759. Children under six years of age, 9893; aged, diseased, or non-effective, 3352; total, 82,824. The amount of compensation money received was 4,494,989*l.*; viz., for the labouring classes, 4,268,809*l.*, and for the children and aged persons, 226,180*l.* According to Montgomery Martin, the number of slaves registered in British Guiana just before the emancipation was 84,915; the average price of slaves from 1822 to 1830 was 114*l.* 11s. 5¾d.; the rate of compensation granted per slave was 51*l.* 17s. 1½d., and the proportion of the 20,000,000*l.* allotted to British Guiana was 4,297,117*l.* It thus appears that, according to the appraisement which had previously been made of their value, in regard to sex, age, strength, health, capabilities, business or trade, &c., the aggregate value amounted to 9,489,559*l.*, thus giving the owners only an equivalent of 8s. in the pound by way of a dividend in the general

bankruptcy of the West Indies. About 3s. 8d. of the appraised sum was granted; their estimated value was taken from the average of the last ten years, calculated from the vendue-office. The use made of this money by the proprietor was to pay off old claims against himself, and to remove mortgage of his property, and in this manner it became of essential service to many an embarrassed planter; but there were, unfortunately, several who, even with this assistance, could not completely extricate themselves.

To the middle and free class of persons the compensation money proved rather a curse than a blessing. Formerly in the possession of a few slaves, they managed to live comfortably by hiring out their services; but deprived now of the labour of these people, and made dependent on their own, they soon got into difficulties, and hardships of all kinds eventually pressed upon them. Possessed (by the compensation money) of a larger sum than they had ever commanded, they either invested it in some lawyer's hands by way of trust, from whence, in many instances, it never returned, or was seldom fairly accounted for; or else squandered it in fugitive enjoyments, in support of a style of living far beyond their station. There was scarcely a house among the better class of coloured people but valuable articles of furniture, silver, and plate were found. A few, indeed, purchased or possessed houses themselves; but then, again, these were leasehold, and when the lease expired most of them had to give up their tenements for arrears in ground-rent, and other charges which had been allowed to accumulate. It is true that they had not at first the opportunity of investing in any banking establishments, for as yet there were none in the colony; but the money was rarely appropriated to any particular kind of business or traffic by which they might have hoped to earn a competency

for themselves and families. It was left for men of another nation, and of inferior education, to reap the golden harvests which a change in the social community offered to the speculative tradesman, for at the time we speak of there were few or no retail shops (except druggists' establishments). The merchant's store yet continued to supply almost every article required for household and other purposes at an exorbitant profit. The want of a small circulating coin compelled persons to purchase larger quantities of perishable articles than they absolutely required, and many goods were never sold except in bulk, at a necessary loss to the consumer. It will soon be seen how such a state of things was turned to the greatest personal advantage by an imported and new people. Hence the free coloured people, through these and other causes, began insensibly to lose from this period their middle "status" in society. They have, as a general rule, sunk into poverty and distress, whilst the negro began from this time to rise above them. But whilst they gradually lost all hope in the "race of life," or were compelled to struggle on in the most homely of occupations, yet there were (and still are) occasions when they displayed all their former pride of birth or connexion. The distinction that has been shown to their colour did not readily become obsolete. At a marriage party, where the bridegroom and bride were coloured, the families of the wedded pair assembled to commemorate it. On breakfast being announced, the company proceeded to the table, where the whole of the coloured members seated themselves, whilst the black quietly, and without any appearance of affront, diligently waited upon their fairer and younger descendants. Such was (if such is not now) the deference paid to colour; but this did not long continue to be the case.

Having thus gone over the employment of the several

races, let us now briefly notice their number. The population of the slaves, we have recently seen, was 82,824, the number of free people at that time might have been about 11,000, giving an entire population for the whole colony of about 94,000 persons, being a decrease, as the reader will recollect, of about 17,000 since 1817. This decrease was chiefly, if not altogether, confined to the negro slaves, for the free populations at each of these periods mustered much about the same number—9000 or 10,000. The causes of such a strange diminution deserve notice, and may be traced to several sources. In the first place, the promiscuous intercourse common to the whole race of slaves had greatly tended to retard the natural increase of children. It was a rare thing to see a woman with a large family—the offspring of one man; this is an evil almost peculiar to uncivilised countries.* Again, the disproportion between the sexes had been formerly very marked, although carefully attended to by the most experienced among the planters, and of late more approaching to an equality in that respect. Again, the fact of the females having to work whilst in a state of pregnancy, no doubt led to many miscarriages, or tended to injure the child in some way; so that a large number of infants perished at their birth, or soon after. Again, the want of proper attendance at their confinements, and the pernicious habits of treating infants under the authority and the advice of the old "grannies," caused many to succumb, although it should be observed that the planters, if only as a matter of profit, took every precaution to avert the loss of progeny in a slave. Again, it is to be remembered that in hot climates the number of children born is generally not so great as it is in proportion in more temperate climates.

* In Russia, according to Voltaire, among the Zoparavian Cossacks, the union of the sexes is indiscriminate, and irrespective of relationship or age, and the children are few and unknown to their parents.

Again, it is notorious that many of the slaves absconded and were never afterwards included in registrations, such as the Maroons, or bush negroes, formerly adverted to. Mal de pays, or home sickness, formerly caused many to pine to death; and also the compulsion to forced labour and continuous toil, together with the sameness of diet and general monotony of life, is asserted by some to have been productive of many suicides. Several other causes might be adduced, such as early marriages and consequent decrepitude, indifference towards offspring, &c. But the above named will comprise nearly, if not all, the true explanations of the melancholy fact. Some might be inclined to attribute it to unhealthiness of climate; but, as will be shown in its proper place, this opinion has been much exaggerated, and produced altogether false impressions on the mind of the public. During slavery, and still more after its cessation, it became of frequent occurrence that marriages were celebrated among the lower classes, but the object and intent were much misunderstood. It was considered decorous, nay, fashionable, for black persons to marry, solely because it was the custom of the whites. It was prompted by no love upon their part; it was not adopted from choice or necessity, interest or morality, but was simply an act of imitation. Most of the earlier marriages ultimately proved a mere mockery of that sacred state, and ended in unhappiness and discord. They either took place between parties who had previously been living together, or between individuals neither of whom could boast of much purity of conduct. It was rarely or never known (and the observation still obtains) that a young couple approached the altar, the woman conscious of purity on her part, or the man determined to obey the vows so solemnly entered into on that occasion. The greater number of the marriages took place among the old and dissipated.

Young men or women seldom presented themselves at the church for such a holy union. It required many years to make the subject properly understood, and much experience and observation to test its efficacy and advantage. By degrees, a better state of things was observable; but even at the present day it is little more than a profanation of the ceremony.

During this year, an ordinance was passed by the governor and the Court of Policy on the 25th of June, for changing the names or titles of the first fiscal, Crown advocate, second and third fiscals, and other officers in British Guiana. The first fiscal was to be in future designated and styled high sheriff of British Guiana; the second fiscal, sheriff of Essequebo; and the third fiscal, sheriff of Berbice; the Crown advocate, legal adviser, and public prosecutor, was to be styled his Majesty's attorney-general in and for the colony of British Guiana: the College of Keizers was in future to be named the College of Electors, and the members thereof electors; the griffier of the board of orphans and unadministered estates of Berbice, was to be called recorder of said board; the schout was to be styled first officer of police; and the dienaars and night-guards termed policemen; and the present cipier of Demerara and under-sheriff of Berbice were to be named keepers of the respective gaols; thus assimilating the titles and institutions in this colony to those of the mother country.

In the next year, November, 1835, a Petty Debt Court was established for the more speedy recovery of debts not exceeding in any case the amount of five pounds sterling, or seventy guilders. The jurisdiction of one justice of the peace to extend over cases not exceeding thirty shillings, or twenty-two guilders; and that of two justices to cases not exceeding five pounds, or seventy guilders.

In the year 1835 also, the Act of the Apprenticeship

having done away with the slave capitation tax, which was one of the chief sources of revenue to the king's chest, it became necessary to establish a civil list. As this subject involved serious discussions between the officials who were materially concerned in its completion and the colonial members of the Court of Policy, or rather Combined Court, no understanding or satisfactory arrangement could be concluded between the two parties; and it became absolutely necessary to call in the services of a mediator, or umpire. The officer selected for this delicate question was Sir Lionel Smith, governor of the Windward Islands, who arrived in May, 1835. He was received with every demonstration of loyalty and honour due to his rank and character, and he succeeded in negotiating a civil list, to continue until December 31st, 1840, as follows:

"To the Lieutenant-Governor	£3500
„ Chief Justice	3000
„ Puisne Judges	2500
„ Secretary to Chief Justice	630
„ High Sheriff	1250
„ Clerk of ditto	300
„ Sheriff of Berbice	800
„ Sheriff of Essequebo	500
„ Attorney-General	500
Ecclesiastical Salaries	850
To the Government Secretary	600
„ Secretary of Court of Policy	500
„ Assistant Government Secretary	500
To Clerks, stationary, and contingencies for the Secretary-office and Court of Policy	450
To the grant to schools	150
„ despatch boat	150
Contingencies	2400
Retiring allowances to the under-mentioned persons: Messrs. J. Sullivan, W. D. Farr, Hallum, Collector James, and Collector Nixon	2400

"To be apportioned among the said individuals in such manner as to his Majesty's Government shall seem just; provided always, that on the death of any of the said individuals, or the grant to any of them, by his Majesty, of any situation or place of emolument, the portion of such sum of

2400*l.* as shall have been appropriated by his Majesty's Government to such person, shall lapse, and the saving thereby accrued shall ensue to the benefit of the colony, in deduction of the aforesaid permanent civil list establishment of 20,980*l.*"*

"These retiring allowances originated thus:—Soon after the re-conquest of Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice, by the British, in 1803, the offices of colonial secretary and provost marshal, in the united colony of Demerara and Essequebo, and of colonial treasurer, colonial secretary, and vendue-master in Berbice, were granted by patent, according to the fashion of this time, to certain political favourites. These offices were paid by fees and commissions, and were very lucrative. The patentees, or some of them, *never visited* the colony, but performed the duties of their offices by deputy. About the year 1831, the home Government, in order to get rid of this abuse, induced the patentees to surrender their patents, on condition of receiving certain stipulated pensions shortly after. As a means of inducing a quiet submission to the changes introduced at that time by orders in Council, Parliament granted to this colony a sum of 32,000*l.*; but before this so-called relief grant was paid over, a dispute arose as to the extent of the powers of the Combined Court, and was followed by the civil list controversy, and a stoppage of the supplies. When the civil list of 1835 was settled, the Combined Court refused to make full provision for the pensions above mentioned, and for some other advances, in consequence of which, the relief fund has never been paid over, but has been appropriated by the home Government to make up these deficiencies; and in this way the greater part of it has been already spent. The only remaining patent office is that of vendue-master of Deme-

* Local Guide, p. xx.

rara and Essequebo, which, however, has since been vacated by the death of the incumbent."

In consideration of this civil list, the amount of which was 20,980*l.*, the Crown surrendered for that term the revenues theretofore remaining at its undisputed disposal under the name of the sovereign's chest, which, however, had been materially diminished by the loss of the capitation-tax on slaves, incident to the abolition of slavery in 1834. The Crown further expressly conceded to the Combined Court, for the term of the civil list, the power of controlling the general estimate which that court had for some years exercised without lawful authority.

In the course of the year 1836 a change took place in the judicial appointments of the colony. Chief Justice Wray returned to England after a residence here of about 15 years; a period fraught with many important changes, both as regards the social and political condition of the colony. His conduct during that time was marked by urbanity; and, as a lawyer, he was considered profound, and intimately acquainted with the complicated legal constitution of the country. His long experience rendered his opinion decisive and respected. If not very diligent, he was always persevering and patient. In his manners he was quiet, sociable, and cheerful. His house became a rendezvous for the best society.

He was succeeded in office by the Honourable J. H. Bent, who was removed from the chief justiceship of the island of St. Lucia to fill a similar situation in British Guiana, where he arrived in July, 1836. This gentleman brought a high character along with him—acquired as it was by a long career of distinguished legal services in New South Wales, Trinidad, Grenada, and St. Lucia. A better account of his fitness for the judicial chair could not be given than that furnished by a late pleasing writer on St. Lucia, and it gives me pleasure to transcribe it, and to

testify to its truth:—"Upright, impartial, and single-minded, in Mr. Bent were happily blended, in a high degree, the ability and tact of the sound constitutional lawyer, and that spirit of independence so eminently characteristic of the true English judge. Having spent many years in the exercise of various judicial functions in New South Wales, his experience in both hemispheres was only surpassed by his integrity, and that was as much above suspicion as it was beyond the reach of slander. Punctilious to the extent to which punctiliousness is a virtue in the judicial character, and yet active to a degree almost incompatible with his delicate state of health, he infused into the different offices connected with the courts a taste for order and regularity, which continues to be productive of the most beneficial results, even to this day."*

This flattering testimonial has been fully borne out by the able services rendered by the judge from the time of his arrival. Such a character was much wanted at the time when he accepted office, and such principles applied to law business in this colony have been, as we shall see, of essential benefit to the community.

Party spirit was still running high at the period of his arrival. The executive and many of the colonists were still warm in mutual animosity. The *Guiana Chronicle* still kept alive the popular feeling of antipathy to the governor, and went so far, in the publication of the 10th August, as to apply the epithet "villain" to his excellency. Notice of this outrage was submitted to the Court of Policy by the high sheriff, his Honour G. Bagot, which thereupon resolved:

"That the court unanimously coincides in feelings of disgust and abhorrence at the epithets applied in the leading article of the *Guiana Chronicle* of the 10th inst. to

* Breen's St. Lucia, p. 337.

his Majesty's representative the lieutenant-governor of this colony."

The opinion of the court was then asked by the lieutenant-governor as to the measures which ought to be adopted to put down a newspaper which kept up so dangerous an excitement in the court, when it was moved by an elective member of the court, and seconded by another: "That, under the circumstances, his excellency would be fully warranted in withdrawing his license from the printer and publisher of the *Guiana Chronicle*." This motion was carried; two of the elective members voting against it, on the ground that if the article in question were libellous, it might be prosecuted. A third colonial member thought that it would be inexpedient for the court to offer the governor any advice upon the occasion. His excellency then desired the following paper, which had been drawn up prior to the vote above mentioned, to be entered on the minutes of the court:

"The lieutenant-governor stated that newspapers were said to be the echo of the sentiments of the community. He trusted, as there was no rule without an exception, so, in the present case, the opinions and language of the *Guiana Chronicle* were not the opinions and the language of the inhabitants of British Guiana. Upon a former occasion he had caused the editor of the paper in question to be prosecuted; if any gentleman supposed that in giving such directions he was influenced by personal feelings, that gentleman was mistaken. His sole object was to compel the editor to be more cautious and circumspect in his conduct, and to abstain from influencing the passions and the feelings of this community, at a moment at which, of all others, the most perfect calmness and forbearance ought to have been inculcated; if he had been convicted, he would no further have been punished than to have had the sentence *kept suspended over him*

in terrorem, to have been enforced against him had he again laid himself open to prosecution. The result, however, of the prosecution is well known; the person in question was looked upon as a martyr for the liberty of the press. His acquittal was celebrated by the hoisting of flags and the firing of guns from the ships in the harbour; a piece of plate was subscribed for and presented to the advocate who defended him—the sale of the paper rapidly augmented, and the editor was encouraged in all the violence and impertinence with which he renewed his attack upon the lieutenant-governor and his measures. Under all the circumstances to which the lieutenant-governor has alluded, his excellency feels that it would be a harsh measure to prosecute an individual who has been encouraged by the patronage he has met with to persevere in a line of conduct which to him has been a source of emolument and celebrity. The good sense of this province is now disgusted with his paper; a reaction has taken place; and as the character, the conduct, and the measures of the lieutenant-governor are better known, and, as he hopes, are better appreciated, the extinction of the *Guiana Chronicle* is easily to be effected by the same means which were employed to promote its circulation. A paper cannot flourish without subscribers, nor can its slander be disseminated without readers; the same influence which raised the *Guiana Chronicle* can put it down; if gentlemen feel hurt that such a paper should be published in this colony, and be forwarded to Europe as a specimen of the advantages they enjoy in having a free press in Guiana, and of the candid, liberal, and gentlemanly manner in which public matters are discussed, they have only themselves to blame, and the remedy is in their own hands."

This rather long statement on the part of the lieutenant-governor is inserted, as it gives a candid exposition of his

views and character, and of the fickle opinions of the colonists. We have seen more than one proof of their rancour; but time and patience had altered in a great measure the popular feelings; a "reaction," as the lieutenant-governor properly termed it, had in truth occurred. The inhabitants were becoming tired of the unprofitableness of newspaper abuse; they had begun to question its correctness, and to appreciate the line of conduct so steadily and sternly pursued by the lieutenant-governor.* It is said of Socrates, that when a low fellow had offered him an injury, he would not complain of it to the judge, but reckoned it (as he said) no more than if an ass had kicked him; and of Cato, that when upon one occasion he received a blow on the face, he was so far from resenting the affront, and from desiring satisfaction, that he would not venture so far as to forgive it, but denied that any such thing had been done, thinking it better not to acknowledge the fact than to prosecute it.

The conduct of his excellency towards his calumniators was not very unlike this, for he preferred to convince them of error rather by his judgment than by their mistakes. We have already seen some of the changes accomplished under his auspices. He found an excited and disorderly band of labourers,—he kept them quiet by his moderation and counsel; he found a dissatisfied and alarmed body of planters,—he kept them restrained by his calmness, and hopeful by his consistency; he found a class of officials somewhat remiss in their duties and lax in their conduct,—he soon set them an example of strict attention to business, and added some broad hints to delinquents; he found a number of institutions and laws unsuited to the changing features of the times, and soon

* Before his arrival, the usual office hours were little attended to by the incumbents, many of whom arrived at 12, and left at 2 P.M. This was soon rectified by a proclamation from the governor.

modified or altered them to a more practical purpose. Some of the principal of these have been already noticed; besides these, he introduced savings banks for the lower orders, and suggested the use of regular incorporated banking establishments, which led to the formation of two —the British Guiana Bank and a branch of the Colonial Bank, in 1837.

This year was also marked by the incorporation of Georgetown, which was placed under the government of a mayor and town council, who were constituted a mayor's court for the trial of petty offences.

An ordinance passed by the governor and Court of Policy on the 1st of March, 1837, provided in this manner for the superintendence of Georgetown, and repealed the former regulations which had been in force since 1812. The new board of superintendence consisted of eleven town councillors, corresponding to the eleven wards into which the town was now divided, viz., Kingston, North Cumingsburg west ward; North Cumingsburg east ward; South Cumingsburg west ward; South Cumingsburg east ward; Robbs Town east ward; Columbia and Lacy Town east ward; New Town east ward; Stabroek east ward; Werken Rust east ward; Charlestown east ward. Rules were made for the election of each councillor, who were to elect annually a president or mayor; a secretary and receiver of town taxes were appointed, with salaries, and the duties of such board, &c., defined.*

Again, another ordinance was passed on the 3rd of March to repeal an ordinance intituled "An ordinance to establish and constitute inferior courts of criminal justice in British Guiana, and to make regulations and provisions instead thereof," in consequence of the changes

* Local Guide, p. 259.

brought about by the abolition of slavery. Justices of the peace were continued, and their duties defined; the dates of the sittings of such courts were fixed upon; also extent of punishment and fine limited, and rules drawn up for the general guidance and working of such courts, &c.

Again, the old and obnoxious practice established by the Dutch of carrying on the business of the Court of Policy and Combined Court with closed doors was done away with on the 30th of March, and the sittings (except in particular cases) opened to the public. This secret mode of conducting important public business was perhaps justified and rendered necessary by the former state of society, but after the emancipation such a system would have appeared repugnant to the new ideas of liberty then infused into the general mind.

"Nous avons changé tout cela"

was to be the rallying cry of the new generation. An important change was also effected in the Court of Policy itself on the 27th of May. The Government secretary and the collector of customs were substituted as official members of the Court of Policy instead of the high sheriff and the sheriff of Essequebo, or former fiscals.

Such were some of the more important occurrences and changes in the government of Sir James Carmichael Smyth, who, in consideration of his valuable services, and as a mark of approval on the part of the King and British Government, had received in 1836 a commission as governor. Hitherto his title, as well as that of the previous rulers, had been only lieutenant-governor, indicating an inferiority and subjection to the governor-general of the West India Islands.

On the 2nd of December, 1838, an ordinance was

passed by the governor and Court of Policy for regulating the qualification for the exercise of the elective franchise in this colony, and which repealed the former one of the 2nd of May, 1835. The new qualification entitling to vote was the payment of taxes upon 2001 guilders, or in amount not less than 70 guilders; agents or attorneys for absentees were permitted to vote under certain conditions.

It was also during this year that, on the 27th of April, a series of rules and regulations for the Combined Court of British Guiana were framed and agreed to at their annual adjourned assembly; for further information concerning which the reader is referred to the Local Guide, page 24.

But while another laurel was being added to an already rich garland of military and civil honours—whilst the conduct of the governor was being satisfactorily appreciated both by the self-willed colonist and the emancipated negro, and his measures received with that praise to which they were so fully entitled, his useful career was suddenly terminated by an untimely death. On the 4th of March, 1838, this excellent governor died after an illness of a few days, occasioned by malignant fever.

His death was a severe blow both to the colonists and their dependents; the one mourned him as a chief worthy of their regard, the other as a friend and benefactor. The universal sorrow evinced for his sudden departure was an irrefragable proof of the sincerity of their feelings. All ranks assembled to pay the last sad homage to his worth; his funeral was one of unusual pomp and melancholy display.

The mortal remains of the departed chief was followed by an immense concourse of people to the grave; crowds of the inhabitants of all classes joined in the mournful

procession; and when the last trace of the solemnity passed away, each individual hastened to his home to ruminate on the fugitive exhibition of human greatness.

Thus ended the mortal career of Sir James Carmichael Smyth. Possessed of great abilities, he had also the firmness and decision of the soldier; impressed with the propriety and justice of his views, he did not seek success by conciliation, artifice, or persuasion; he at once declared his intention, and carried his point by perseverance and unflinching endurance. There was no subterfuge in his policy; his opinion was unmistakable; he did not seek to flatter others in order to gain his ends; neither did he encourage flattery towards himself. He was led by no will but his own. No plausibility of address or design could deceive him. He saw through motives at a glance, and opposed a stern resistance. Personal abuse and misinterpretation were always treated by him with indifference and contempt. He was, perhaps, too reserved in his explanations, too austere in his demeanour. He had not the art of softening the hard commandment, or of gilding the bitter pill. He might have gained more by yielding a little. He would have escaped much unnecessary obloquy by showing his philanthropy more, and his desire for the good of all; and would have ensured admiration and attachment where he always commanded respect. His temper was, perhaps, too warm to venture upon an argument when he felt convinced of its truth and utility; his energy too vehement to wait for the applause which would have followed a patient and repeated explanation. He thought, perhaps, to have forced forward the emancipation, when it would have been easier to lead it; that to have appeared wavering, would have been cowardice; or to have seemed conciliatory, would have been weak. But whatever opposition and insult his conduct excited, there

can be now no doubt of the wisdom of his views, and of his sincere desire for the true interest of the colony. His character claims this tribute to his memory, and his conduct this humble attempt to stamp with praise his useful career in the annals of a country in which he lived and died.

CHAPTER XIII.

ADMINISTRATION OF MAJOR ORANGE AND LIEUTENANT-COLONEL BUNBURY—APPOINTMENT AND JURISDICTION OF STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES — ARRIVAL OF HENRY LIGHT, ESQ., AS GOVERNOR, JUNE, 1838—ABOLITION OF THE APPRENTICESHIP — DISALLOWANCE OF CERTAIN ORDINANCES — GOVERNOR MAKES A TOUR OF INSPECTION—CONDITION OF THE PLANTER—COMPETITION FOR LABOUR —CONDITION OF LABOURER—RATE OF WAGES—DIVISION OF BRITISH GUIANA INTO COUNTIES—GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS TO COMBINED COURT, 1839—PROPOSED IMMIGRATION LOAN OF FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS—SUBJECT OF IMMIGRATION—EARLY SCHEMES RESPECTING IT—REFLECTIONS ON THE SUBJECT—COLONIAL INDENTURE ACT, 1835-6—INTRODUCTION OF ISLAND NEGROES—THEIR CHARACTER—DISPUTES ABOUT IMMIGRATION ORDINANCES—STOPPAGE OF THE SUPPLIES, 1840—VOLUNTARY IMMIGRATION SOCIETY—NEW CIVIL LIST—IMMIGRATION ORDINANCES OF 1841—APPOINTMENT OF AGENTS—BOUNTIES—PORTUGUESE IMMIGRATION; ITS CHARACTER AND RESULTS—COOLIE IMMIGRATION; ITS CHARACTER AND RESULTS—GENERAL REFLECTION ON IMMIGRATION.

It was an old-established custom of the colony, for the purpose of averting the interruption of public business, that in the event of the death of the governor the oath of administration should be immediately taken by the commanding officer of the troops, who continued to act until a successor was appointed by the Government. Of course, the less such officers meddled with the laws and ordinances of the colony the better; for as their sway was but temporary, it scarcely allowed them time to become acquainted with the true condition of a province over which they had been thus accidentally called to preside. But, occasionally, some mischief was accomplished in the brief space of a few months; and probably such mischief

would have been more frequent, had not the authorities in England countermanded or put a check to any irregularities on their part.

It so happened that Major Orange, of the 67th Regiment, was in temporary command of the troops at the death of Sir James Carmichael Smyth, and on the 7th of March he was sworn in as acting-governor; but two days after he was superseded by a superior military officer, Colonel Bunbury, of the same regiment, who took the oath of administration on the 9th. The character of this gentleman was not adapted to the exigencies of the times; his views were mere reflections from the opinions of others; and it might have proved dangerous to have entrusted the government of such conflicting interests as those between a sinking planter and a rising peasant to hands which, though well intentioned, were too rough and hasty.

Instigated by the colonial party, he passed through the Court of Policy an ordinance enforcing a contract law, a vagrant law, with very severe clauses, giving great power to the local justices of the peace, and abolishing the stipendiary magistracy; and also two acts establishing a police force, and putting it at the control of the local justices to enforce their sentences. It should be remembered that, in accordance with a clause in the slavery abolition act, the Crown had appointed special justices of the peace with fixed salaries from Great Britain, to whom was entrusted the exclusive jurisdiction of all matters of dispute arising between masters and apprentices. The power of these justices was modified and extended by various acts of Parliament, orders in Council, and ordinances. After the termination of the apprenticeship, stipendiary magistrates, consisting generally of the same persons who had held the special commissions of the peace, were commissioned, to whom was specially en-

trusted the exclusive jurisdiction of all matters of controversy between masters and servants. The colony was divided into fourteen judicial districts, over each of which a stipendiary presided. Besides their commission as stipendiary magistrates, they also held the ordinary commission of the peace; by virtue of which commission they sat as members of the inferior criminal courts and the petty debt courts, and performed most of the ordinary judicial business of the colony.

The attempt to abolish such a necessary class of persons was ill-timed and injudicious. All these ordinances, together with a poor-law passed by the court shortly after the emancipation, by which relations in the first degree were obliged to support their impotent relatives; as well as a militia ordinance, disqualifying all who had been apprenticed labourers from serving in the militia; and an ordinance for a census and registry of the population, distinguishing those who had been apprenticed labourers, were subsequently disapproved of by the British Government, and consequently annulled. The subjects of contracts, combinations, vagrancy, and the jurisdiction of the stipendiary magistrates, were regulated by an order in Council issued for that purpose.

At a meeting, however, of the Court of Policy, held on the 20th of June, 1838, Dr. M'Turk, afterwards knighted for this and other services, one of the colonial members, and a gentleman of liberal and enlightened views, gave notice of motion to bring in a bill to abolish the system of apprenticeship. The effect of example, as already shown by the island of Antigua, where the apprentices had been liberated shortly after emancipation, and the imperfect working of the apprenticeship, no doubt gave rise to the proposition, and, as a matter of course, it became immediately a subject of severe discussion. At the suggestion of the chief justice, however, further argument on the subject was delayed until the bill was actually before the

court. Meantime, the opinion of the public became excited, and the contemplated measure was examined in all its phases. It was reserved, however, for another governor to execute so difficult a measure, although credit is certainly due to Colonel Bunbury for his willing assent to the proposition of Dr. M'Turk.

On the 28th of June, 1838, Henry Light, Esq., having arrived from England or Antigua, assumed the government, and was sworn into office. This gentleman, formerly in the army, and of considerable attainments, and lately governor of Dominica, undertook his difficult task at a time when a great crisis had approached.

In a despatch to Lord Glenelg, dated 9th July, 1838, the governor adverted to his arrival on the 26th, and to a proposed meeting of the Court of Policy on the 4th of July. His excellency alluded also to the conflicting feelings among proprietors on the subject, and mentioned the receipt of a petition presented to him by a deputation from a large body of proprietors of Berbice, deprecating the proposed measure. The adjourned meeting of the Court of Policy took place on the 4th of July, and after a short discussion with closed doors, they were opened to the public. Many petitions were read against the measure, none for it. The introduction of the bill was opposed by three of the colonial members, one of whom protested against the eligibility of the court to decide on a measure of such importance; but this was overruled. A first reading of the bill was allowed; it was seconded by Mr. Macrae, but was opposed by others. His excellency addressed the court strongly in favour of it, after excusing himself from taking a part in the discussion, in consequence of its important nature; the governor slightly reviewed the career of the African, and the late change in the relative character of planter and labourer. He augured also an increase in the value of property with the additional

industry of freemen, and that a more healthy state of prosperity would be the result, although very large fortunes might never again be made. His excellency also reverted to what he had witnessed in Antigua in 1836, where slavery had been abolished without the intermediate state of apprenticeship, and where the peasantry were orderly and industrious. In several also of the Leeward Islands he had witnessed a similar result, and stated that during his late administration of the island of Dominica for thirteen months, steps had already been taken for full emancipation. After such considerations, his excellency concluded that the proposed measures might be adopted in perfect safety in this important colony.

The second reading of the bill did not take place until the 10th of July (on the 9th of July his excellency wrote to Lord Glenelg on the progress of the bill), owing to the indisposition of the Honourable Mr. M'Turk, when it was warmly advocated by the attorney-general, who decided as to the eligibility of the measure. In the course of the debate it was attempted to throw the responsibility on the governor and official section, but ineffectually, and after much angry controversy the bill was sent into committee the next day, the usual standing orders being dispensed with, which usually required a delay of fourteen days. On the 12th of July the bill was carried, after the third reading, and his excellency had the happiness of signing the necessary ordinance. A royal salute was fired upon the occasion, and the purport of the bill proclaimed in three different parts of the town. Well might his excellency remark, in a despatch to Lord Glenelg of the same date, "I consider it fortunate for me that the first act of my public administration has been this measure of grace in favour of so large a number of my fellow-subjects."

However satisfactory to the executive, the planters naturally regarded it with distrust and uneasiness. They

urged that this colony was different from the islands, inasmuch as here all the crops are not taken off until the 1st of January, while in the islands they are terminated on the 1st of August, and that to deprive them of the services of their labourers at a most important season without compensation would be unjust. Supported, however, by a section of the colonial members, the bill passed, two colonial members voting against it, and one declining to vote.

The following is the ordinance enacted on that occasion, which was passed on the 12th, and published on the 16th:

"Whereas the non-prædial apprenticed labourers of this colony will be fully freed and discharged from their apprenticeship on the 1st day of August next;

"And whereas it has become necessary and expedient that the apprenticeship of the prædial labourers should also be terminated at the same time;

"Be it therefore enacted, that all and every the persons who, on the 1st day of August, 1838, shall be holden within British Guiana as prædial apprenticed labourers, shall, upon and from and after the said 1st day of August, 1838, become and be to all intents and purposes whatsoever absolutely freed and discharged of and from the then remaining term of their apprenticeship, created by the Act of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, intituled 'An act for the abolition of slavery throughout the British colonies, for promoting the industry of the manumitted slaves, and for compensating the persons hitherto entitled to the services of such slaves,' and of and from all and every the obligations imposed on them by the said act, and the several pains and penalties thereunder or thereby incurred."

The social system being thus materially altered by the repeal of the act of apprenticeship, it became necessary to frame several new ordinances to meet the coming

changes. An ordinance was accordingly passed to make provision for the due maintenance and support of the aged and infirm prædial labourers to be discharged from apprenticeship on the 1st day of August next, as well as for other purposes. This ordinance was, however, disapproved of by the Home Government; and in a despatch received by Governor Light from Lord Glenelg, dated 15th of September, 1838, it was intimated that a royal order in Council would appear, providing for the maintenance of the poor in her Majesty's colonies; meanwhile, the ordinance was to continue in force. Another ordinance, for the further amendment of the acts and ordinances of the militia of British Guiana, prohibiting all who were apprenticed labourers on the 31st of July from serving in the militia, was altogether disallowed at home, on the ground of invidious distinctions "founded on the servile condition in which one class of society was formerly held." A similar fate also awaited an ordinance to ascertain the number of persons in British Guiana, and to establish registries of such persons in the different parishes thereof; for here again it was objected to by the Home Government that a serious inconvenience would result from perpetuating distinctions which were now formally abolished.

It must certainly be admitted that there was no want of energy on the part of the British Legislature to eradicate every vestige of slavery, and to do ample justice to a people so long considered as oppressed. Nor was the governor wanting in his endeavours to elevate and enlighten the labourers in their new duties. Proclamations were issued, inculcating habits of industry, sobriety, and morality; exhorting the good to persevere in their conduct; and threatening the bad with punishment.

On the 2nd of August his excellency set out on a tour of inspection through the colony. The labourers on the

estates were collected in suitable places, and were addressed by the governor, who dwelt on the relative condition of employer and employed, and advised them to prosecute their labour without interruption. In a despatch to Lord Glenelg, dated 13th of August, his excellency states: "The readiness with which I was understood surprised me, and the effect has been most satisfactory." After a fatiguing tour of nearly a month, his excellency returned to Georgetown on the 28th, and reported very favourably both of the labouring population and of the capabilities of the districts which he had visited.

The last link of slavery had been thus cast aside by a voluntary act on the part of the colonial legislature, and the social state of the colony was now to undergo, in a few years, changes more rapid and remarkable than could possibly have obtained under the old system. The planters, lulled into passive resignation by the temporary aid of the compensation money, could not, however, but feel that, in the deprivation of their slaves, an effect similar to the withdrawal of so much capital from their properties had been effected; and whilst many had to pay off pressing mortgages and previously-incurred debts, a great number, especially of the absentee proprietors, squandered away, or neglected to invest profitably, the sums thus received. Thus the compensation money, instead of being returned to, or spent on, the respective estates, was otherwise used; and when the time came for paying the labourers their regular wages, instead of supporting them as under the old system, monetary difficulties of all kinds presented themselves.

The planters, indeed, foresaw with despondency, that if they had to depend solely upon the irregular and uncertain labour of the emancipated people, these prospects would be materially affected; but they made no really useful endeavours as yet to check the advancing

evil which was to overwhelm them, but went on as usual, hoping, grumbling, and making sugar. The only efforts which were indeed made to ensure the necessary labour proved in the end the most injurious to themselves;—a kind of rivalry was set up as to who would give the highest wages. The greatest bribes and inducements were held out to the negroes to settle on particular spots, thus encouraging that already too roving, restless disposition so destructive to the practical utility of the labourer. It rather served the interest of the negro than his master; it exaggerated his self-importance, which he was not long in perceiving; but, in the end, it effectually ruined many a planter, and encumbered all. It seemed certainly a natural step to take. The surest way to ensure labour was to pay high for it; the most certain method of making a man work who felt disinclined, was to reward him; but, at the moment, it was forgotten what would be the result of such a system. The price of produce was remunerating, even at such a means of raising it; but it remained for future years to expose the falsity of the system and its suicidal tendency. Planters knew too well the facilities this colony afforded for the encouragement of a race of squatters; they feared the too speedy withdrawal of labour, and its necessary sequence—the abandonment of property; and perhaps thought no remedy too dearly purchased which offered to save them. Some still clung with despairing confidence to the hope that the negro would be compelled to work; they made up their minds to be, in some degree, losers; but still fostered the idea that sugar-making was the only road to fortune-making. The colony was not regarded as a home, as an adopted country, a field sufficiently worthy of their occupancy, but rather as a purgatory, through which they must pass to obtain the elysium of their desires. Their exertions to gain wealth

and depart were incessant, their anxiety about their success intolerable; hence, few or no endeavours were made to sweeten the cares of life, or gladden with comfort the scenes of their industry. We have already seen that this was the error of the earlier English settlers, so different to the Dutch; and we now see the same error renewed and practised. So long as this continues to be the spirit and feeling of colonists, so long will their dreams be visionary and their hopes blighted; so long as such a principle is acted up to, so long will disappointment and unhappiness result. Exceptions may have occurred, and will occur again. Fortunes have been made here, and spent elsewhere; but this, as a general rule of practice, is unfitted for the genius of the nineteenth century. And yet, with all the disadvantages of such prospects before them, there were many speculations among the mercantile and agricultural classes in 1838. Several young men, without capital, and trusting to the old prestige of West India wealth, engaged in transactions far beyond their means; new mercantile establishments started up in Water-street, only to disappear as rapidly; plantations were bought which were never to be paid for; the system of long credit tended to encourage such proceedings; and it was not until a commercial revolution took place, that the pernicious habit was exploded, and only gradually renounced. A great show of affluence and of public and private amusement was kept up at this period; but it was artificial and of short duration. Balls and parties were as frequent, perhaps more so than ever; gay equipages abounded; races were numerously and fashionably attended; even the ladies, carried away by the ardour of the excitement, condescended to bet upon this or that horse; a pair of gloves, a bonnet, were often thus won, for gallantry forbid that the gentleman should triumph.

Such was the anomalous social state of the planters; whilst, on the other hand, the labourer, now left to his own guidance and resources, naturally exhibited some confusion and irresolution in his habits. It was not long after its accomplishment that the negro began to feel the advantages of the emancipation. Although at first disappointed, and dissatisfied at the restrictions of an apprenticeship, he was soon made to perceive of how great value he was—how absolutely necessary the toil of his arm was for the very existence of the colony. A nomade sort of life seemed at first natural to him. He seemed anxious to test his liberty by wandering about in search of the new happiness reserved for him; many of the labourers left the estates to which for years they had been accustomed, especially the young and middle-aged, for, as before remarked, the older among the people remained fixed to their accustomed localities, where the associations of earlier years were strongest—a fact much in favour of the toleration practised in the last days of slavery. Regular work was for a time abandoned, and a very marked falling off in the quantity of sugar produced was one of the earliest consequences of such changes; the women generally abandoned the field, and the men were only kept to it by necessity. Domestic service invited many, and numbers flocked to town to such employment. A savage sort of life held out attractions to a certain proportion. They depended on the fish that the rivers or large trenches afforded, or on the few ground provisions they could raise, such as cassava, ochres, pigeon peas, yams, &c., together with a few fowls. Living far up the rivers, or on the back lands of estates, they erected scanty huts as a shelter from the sun of the dry season, and the torrents of the wet months. Apart from civilised scenes and the healthful industry of the plantations, they began from this time to relapse into old habits of apathy, indolence, and ignorance; and, withdrawing from the use-

fulness of former scenes, lost the advantages which a system of freedom had destined for them. But to the industrious and the intelligent what a noble field presented itself. Work was abundant; their labour was sought for with a competition too keen among planters not to be detected by the most ignorant of the people. Who can blame the negro if he made the most of his peculiar position? who can complain if he valued the sweat of his brow at the highest possible rate? The planters in former times had made the most of the advantages which they then possessed; but the tables were now turned; the wheel of fortune had gone round; it had flung from on high the opulent planter into the slough of despond, and it had raised aloft the trampled serf, and left him rejoicing at the unexpected change. The labour of the negro began to be at a premium; nice cottages were built upon estates as an inducement for the people to settle there; medical attendance was provided for them as before, nay, even medicine; Sunday and other schools were established for their children, and such wages were allowed them as in no other country could be met with. The industrious man could earn half a dollar a day (2s. 1d.) for about six hours' labour; the remainder of the day was his own; he might either commence another task, or in some other way add to his gains by cultivating provisions or stock. If anything occurred to displease him, a change to the next estate offered similar, or probably higher, advantages.

But this anomalous position of the labourer was productive of much bickering at the outset; constant employment was found for the stipendiary magistrates to adjust differences and disputes. It was a new era in the social history of British Guiana to witness the late slave standing on an equality at the bar of justice with his former owner. It was one of the earliest privileges which fol-

lowed in the steps of freedom, and, perhaps, there has been no more favourite boon received by the negro than this; it was a distinction which they had scarcely anticipated, a right which did more to efface all recollections of former differences between man and man than any other circumstance. There is no doubt of the necessity of such tribunals; but, as might naturally have been expected, it has frequently since led to much abuse and inconvenience, and to this day proves a bitter sort of annoyance between the planter and his emancipated serf.

These were some of the principal features of the social community which marked the advent of the new governor, and it demanded on his part the utmost caution and vigilance not to interrupt the progress of the new system, and offend, by partial administration, either the sensitive opinions of the planter, or the rising ambition of the labourer. Already were the home philanthropists pointing with triumph at the novel spectacle of an emancipated race of ignorant people working in peaceful order and contentment; already were the proprietors of estates declaring that the evils of such a forced state of liberty had overtaken them, and that nothing short of strenuous exertions and concessions on their part could hold together the repellent elements of the social system.

Early in 1838, British Guiana was divided into three counties—Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice, formerly called districts or colonies; and an alteration was also made in the number and division of parishes, viz., thirteen in Demerara and Essequebo, and six in Berbice. A few of these parishes (five) belonged to the Kirk of Scotland, and the remainder to the Church of England, to all of which clergymen and catechists or clerks were appointed; besides these, several chapels and churches were erected, and conducted by Independent and other preachers; these

were eagerly attended, and, in many instances, wholly supported by voluntary subscribers; schools, also, in connexion with these churches, were established.

In the course of this year the duties, jurisdiction, &c., of the stipendiary magistrates were defined by a proclamation issued on the 1st of November; and the services of these gentlemen were of the utmost importance in deciding the numerous and vexatious subjects of complaint which were submitted for investigation.

On the 8th of October his excellency the governor issued a proclamation addressed to the labourers, in which, in judicious and gentle language, he rebuked them for their irregularity at work, and for their general idleness and discontent; which, however, effected but little good.

In the course of an address to the Court of Policy on the 6th of November, his excellency reviewed some of the social changes, adverted to the number of new ordinances passed, and explained the nature of those which had been disallowed by the Home Government. He alluded also to the renewed commissions of the stipendiary magistrates, and to a petition from the inhabitants of the colony praying for an alteration in the mode of electing the colonial members of the Court of Policy, and their wish to abolish the College of Keizers. An ordinance was also passed by the governor and the Court of Policy to consolidate the marshals' offices of Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice, and to make permanent provision for the same. By this new ordinance one provost marshal, seven ordinary marshals, and two copyists were appointed, and their several duties, fees, &c., defined. A *vagrant* act was also passed this year, specifying the nature and definition of a term so new to the labourer, and providing fines and punishments for offenders, who were to be tried before the stipendiary magistrates or justices of the peace. An alteration was likewise made in the elective franchise,

assimilating it more to the altered circumstances of the times. At the first meeting of the Court of Policy (17th of September) after the 1st of August, his excellency addressed the members on the state of the labouring population, and congratulated them on the peaceable and successful working of the act for the abolition of the apprenticeship, on the good feeling between employer and employed, on the slight falling off of labour and neglecting of estates, and to the few commitments for offences.

In the following year, on the 12th of January, 1839, an ordinance was passed repealing that of 1837, which had invested the mayor's court with judicial functions, and a Georgetown police-office was instituted for the better administration of justice. It provided for a police magistrate and clerk, and the powers and duties were duly defined and published. Another ordinance in the following June provided for an effective system of police within British Guiana. An inspector-general, Mr. Crichton, was appointed, with three inspectors, one for each county, together with a clerk and a proper "police force." Rules were drawn up for their guidance, and their powers and duties defined.

On the 19th July, 1839, his excellency addressed the members of the Combined Court, and among other things remarked: "I defy the most enthusiastic, false or true philanthropist, to say that a day's labour, which may be completed in five or six hours, or even in less time, is an oppressive demand on the labourer, paid as he is, and favoured as he is, almost universally with other privileges, which place him far above the condition of the labourer in Europe. The freedom which leads to the mere supply of the common calls of hunger, will never raise the descendant of Africa in the scale of human beings which the friends of freedom so much desire." The governor also stated, that in five years, from January, 1834, to December, 1838,

fines amounting to 612,000 guilders have been incurred by individuals in the militia, and that the amount saved by the reduction of the militia was 30,350 guilders. As regards the colony, "The importance of this province is fully known to her Majesty's Government. With improvements in machinery and drainage, the European may then share in the cultivation of the land; unwholesome swamps will disappear; thousands of acres will be reclaimed from their state of nature or abandonment; and where we now count our population by thousands, their hundredfold will lay the foundation of an empire with sources of wealth to the mother country inferior only to her India possessions in the East, with this advantage to the former, that the latter will always be of more tedious access."

In 1839, Messrs. Scoble, Ainslie, and Stuart, three influential members of the Anti-Slavery Society, arrived in Demerara professedly to inquire into the condition of the labouring population. The governor regretted their appearance at this particular juncture. Mr. Scoble left in June; but squabbles, incident on their proceedings, arose between them and the planters.

On the subject of immigration there occurred difficulties between the governor and many of the colonists; an immigration ordinance was passed by the Court of Policy, and it was proposed to borrow the sum of 400,000*l.* for the purposes of immigration; but his excellency took a different view of the question, and on the 26th June, 1839, wrote to the Marquis of Normanby opposing the proposed loan of 400,000*l.* for immigration purposes, on account of its burdening the colony for forty years. Governor Light thought that about 2000 labourers annually would be sufficient for the wants of the colony and its means of accommodation. A tax of two-and-a-quarter

per cent. on produce would raise about 400,000*l.*, and cover the expense.

Mr. Rose also argued against the proposed loan, and brought forward the following objections:

1st. That great mortality would ensue should immigration in large masses take place.

2nd. That it would burden the colony with a debt for forty years.

3rd. That the amount of the sum proposed to be raised is too large, and would not be required at once.

4th. No security could be placed on the Combined Court granting the funds necessary to provide for the interest and redemption of the capital.

5th. That there was no specific tax or fund out of which the money is to be provided. That there was no security against it being raised by unjust taxation; and that future Combined Courts might alter the proposed grant.

To which it was replied, that the question of mortality was distinct from that of the subject of immigration; that the sum might be less than 400,000*l.*, and provision made annually for its gradual extinction; and, that the want of faith in future Combined Courts was irrational and illiberal. Dr. M'Turk also opposed the proposed immigration law.

The ordinance appeared, however, but was disapproved of at home, and disallowed by the Marquis of Normanby, who objected to immigration from India, Africa,* and the Bahamas, as well as to the proposed plan for introducing immigrants here from the islands, as recommended by Governor Light.

In spite of this opposition, the subject was again taken up by the colonists, who held public meetings; and a

* See despatch dated 15th of August, 1839, and addressed to Governor Light.

petition, addressed to the Queen, was signed by 700 or 800 persons, and was forwarded by the governor to Lord John Russell, who then held the office of colonial secretary. Lord John Russell, in addressing Governor Light on this subject, although admitting the falling off in the amount of produce, yet sarcastically observed that the word "ruin" made use of by the colonists did not seem to apply to the poverty of the people, nor to the want of food or raiment, neither to the absence of riches or luxury, but simply to the decrease of sugar cultivation.

Immediately after the emancipation, the subject of immigration had occupied the attention of the colonists, who clearly saw, that without continuous labour, their capital and properties would be wasted. Several gentlemen, both in Demerara and Berbice, determined upon sending a vessel to the Bahamas, or Lower Islands, in order that persons unable in those islands to procure a livelihood should be invited here, where ample work and wages would be found for them. A letter declaratory of their object was forwarded by Governor Light to the governor of the Bahamas, stating the rate of wages here at about eight dollars per month, with house and garden-ground, medical attendance and medicine. Early in September, 1838, the subject was submitted to the consideration of Lord Glenelg by Governor Light, who forwarded the leading points of a communication received by him from the secretary of the British Guiana Bank advocating its necessity on financial grounds, and suggesting that extensive immigration ought not to be left to individuals. It was also proposed that colonial emigrant agents should be appointed, and certain premiums offered by the colony and proprietors on the importation of effective agricultural labourers. Very shortly after this, the subject was brought forward in the Court of

Policy on the 21st of September, and certain resolutions were adopted calculated to combine advantages both to the colony and to the emigrant. The assistant Government secretary, W. B. Wolseley, Esq., was appointed by his excellency agent for emigrants for this colony. These resolutions were not objected to by Lord Glenelg, who, however, pointed out some important modifications in the proposed scheme.

The project of immigration now thoroughly occupied public attention, and was doomed to exercise the greatest influence on the future condition of the colony. It has been the pabulum of all young and aspiring countries, has found an episode in nearly every history, and still continues to be the panacea for colonial evils. It had its origin in necessity; it flourished in proportion to the civilisation and extent of empires, and has been the theme of praise to the statesman, the political economist, and the patriot. It has been the desired object of the poor and unfortunate, the beacon to many a "land of promise," the tomb of many a hope. The young and ardent have passionately pursued this "ignis fatuus," the middle-aged and prudent have confided themselves to its enticing rewards, and the old and covetous have groped their way along with the rest, in the hope of amassing wealth or honour at the "last hour." Its votaries have all set out buoyed up with the gayest prospects, and embarked on the treacherous stream which was to lead them they knew not where. Its currents guided some to the east and some to the west; its attractions operated in all directions; but the rocks were not indicated, nor the shoals mapped out to the mariners of this unknown sea, ere they could reach the "gold-bound coast." From a hazardous speculation, it has become an established system; from relieving old, it has created new, countries; the transplanted twigs have grown into mighty trees, the plucked bud has been

engrafted on a foreign stem, and the fruit benefited by the change. Like the lopped members of the inferior animals, these members have assumed a vitality of their own; an inherent principle of life was flickering faintly in them, until accidental circumstances developed more innate strength; the vigour of self-support was infused into the system, and like the "newly born," it acquired a principle of life separate from the parent, but capable of like development and increase. Emigration from the "Old World" has acted like the withdrawal of the superfluous blood from a too robust constitution—it has relieved the plethora of the system. Immigration, on the contrary, has acted like the transfusion of the vital fluid into the veins of a weak and debilitated subject; it has aroused latent power, and infused by its stimulus an artificial but useful energy into a helpless and sinking economy; renewal of life has followed its application, and saving health resulted from its administration. But, like other human inventions, it has led to abuse, and deception and disappointment have retarded its practical advantages. The home deserted has never been replaced by another, and the land forsaken never again reached.

"Nihil est ab omni parte beatum."

The men who have relinquished their hearths in discontent have not always encountered better fortunes, and the mind dissatisfied with bare subsistence in its own clime has not always arrived at affluence elsewhere.

"Vivitur parvo bene, cui paternum
Splendet in mensa tenui Salinum,
Nec leves somnos timor aut cupido
Sordidus aufert.
Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa? Quid terras alio calentes
Sole mutamus? *Patriæ quis exul*
Se quoque fugit?

Scandit æratas vitiosa naves
Cura: nec turmas equitum relinquit,
Ocior cervis, et agente nimbos
Ocyor euro.
Lætus in præsens animus, quod ultra est
Oderit curare, et amare lento
Temperet risu." *

It is scarcely necessary, after what has been narrated as to the falling off of regular labour since the emancipation, to point out the object of immigration to these shores. No act was ever better calculated to relieve the necessities under which the planters suffered, and to supply a sufficiency of labourers at rates which would enable the employers to raise and manufacture sugar at a profit. It also tended to increase the importance and civilisation of the colony. But to the creole labourer its intent was obvious; it pointed out to him clearly, that if he was unwilling to work an attempt would be made to procure others to do what he neglected; but it would be wrong to assert that it was an act of retaliation intended to injure the prospects of the negro. It was introduced to relieve a pressing want; a temporary remedy for a serious malady. The colony was threatened with a paralysis of its motive power; here was a remedy which was to infuse new life into the torpid system, a new agent to bear on the physical infirmity of the land. Justice must certainly be done by all parties to the creole labourer, in admitting that throughout this important era in a new social state he conducted himself with great moderation, liberality, and good humour. At first, he showed a great deal of indifference, if not apathy, to the contemplated scheme of introducing people from other lands to compete with him in the field; but his attention was soon attracted to the subject by the ever-watchful guardians of his class, "the Independent preachers," who, by whatever feelings ac-

* Horace, Lib. ii. Ode 16.

tuated, whether regard for the supposed interest of the negro, or prompted by the reference it bore to their own affairs (inasmuch as in general they depended upon the contributions of their congregations), soon produced a general movement on the subject.

The first efforts of immigration (and, indeed, many subsequent ones) were not calculated to alarm a sensible and observing people. Setting aside any intention of reviewing a few ill-judged attempts to introduce, at different periods of our history, a few Europeans into the colony for the purposes of trade and agriculture, such as English, Dutch, and German families, which all ended in disappointment, the majority of the settlers having died shortly after their arrival, and the remainder returning to their native land, we pass on to consider the efforts made in 1835 and 1836 to bring labourers to British Guiana; so early after the act of apprenticeship was the necessity for them evident. In this year a "Colonial Indenture Act" was passed, the object of which was to enable private individuals to procure labourers from the West India islands at their own expense, and bring them to this country under contract of servitude for so many years. Small vessels were chartered by some enterprising planters, and at a considerable outlay many islanders were added to the population of British Guiana. In the course of the years 1836, 1837, and 1838, about 5000 labourers were thus introduced by ordinances, which were, however, subject to many modifications by successive orders in Council of the original indenture act; but their utility was questionable, the demand upon their labour and their constitutions gave rise to disease and disappointment, the greater number quarrelled with their "contractors;" and when the ordinance to terminate the apprenticeship was enforced, they absolutely included themselves in its enact-

ments, and quietly broke off all engagements. These people were mostly from the islands of St. Christophers, Angola, Montserrat, and Nevis, and, contributing to the motley group met with in these regions, they deserve some notice. At first their number was too few to attract much notice, and their influence on the social state but trifling. Many were employed as domestic servants; the rest sent to the field. Of these the majority were of little consideration in their own country. Possessed of much of the physical character of the Guiana creole negro, they undoubtedly enjoyed more acute, varied, and expanded intelligence. They seemed to be further advanced in civilisation, but also to have imbibed its accompanying vices. A marked disposition to cunning, theft, and intrigue was manifested among them, and at the various criminal courts which were subsequently held it was notorious that a disproportionate number of them was generally included.* They had not led so simple a life as that of the native creole, had been brought into more direct contact with the inhabitants of other countries, and had congregated more in towns. They were indebted for their advancement, and perhaps their vices, to the example of their superiors from Europe. Their manners were more polite and studied than the lazy, unaffected deportment of the Guiana negro, towards whom they evinced a feeling of contempt. Apter in the acquisition of knowledge, and more plausible in behaviour, they lacked the honesty of purpose which generally marked the conduct of the others. Many of the better sort were enabled by their industry to return to their friends with ample evidence of their success. They affected, and still continue to affect, much contempt for the new country to which they were brought. With

* Of 109 convicts (at the close of 1845) who were lodged at the penal settlement, upwards of 50 were aliens, or foreign to British Guiana.

feelings of patriotism they gave the preference to their own lands, but could not deny that greater advantages were open to them here than "at home." The greater number of them have, in fact, remained here.

The imperfect result of the "colonial indenture scheme" being demonstrated, attention was directed to the formation of an "immigration loan," but to this scheme, as we have seen, the governor refused his consent. These circumstances, which, together with the failing prospects of the planters, and the diminution of the quantity of produce raised, produced feelings of discontent, both against the English Government, and the governor by whom it was represented in the colony.

On the 28th January, 1840, the governor, in addressing the legislature, adverted to the falling off in the amount of produce, and offered some explanation to account for it. He also alluded to the fact of high prices being still paid for estates, and mentioned that the receipts of import and other duties had exceeded the estimated sum. He congratulated them on the small amount of crime, but lamented the failure of laws to regulate wages, &c.

Disagreements, however, arose in the course of the session, and the supplies were stopped. Sir M. M'Turk addressed a letter on this occasion to the clergy and others, requesting their co-operation in preparing a petition to the Queen against this act of the Combined Court, but his proposal was not carried into effect. The governor wrote home on the subject, and such was the flourishing state of the finances, that the public service was sustained to the end of the year without taxation.

Finding that immigration could not be effected as a legislative measure, a very spirited attempt was made by the colonists to accomplish it themselves. Several private meetings were held in 1840, and at length a

"Voluntary Subscription Immigration Society" was formed, with the intent of introducing immigrants at the expense of the individual members. A large proportion of the planters and others interested composed the society. Fifteen directors were chosen,* and subscriptions were collected from them to defray the general expenses; a secretary was appointed, with a salary of 400*l.* per annum, and suitable premises near the water-side engaged for the reception of the immigrants, besides offices for the transaction of business.

In the beginning also of this year (21st January, 1840), two delegates (Messrs. Peck and Price) arrived from America, where an intelligent colonist (Mr. Carberry) had communicated with the Anti-Slavery Society of the United States and that of Liberia, and after travelling through the colony, they departed in March, and reported favourably on reaching Baltimore. They also visited Trinidad, but gave the preference to this colony.

In the following year (1841) a large steamer of 180 horse power, the *Venezuela*, was purchased for 47,000 dollars (about 10,000*l.*). This vessel was brought to Barbadoes by Messrs. Cavan and Co., but proved perfectly useless to the colony, and the whole of this expensive scheme ended in jealousies, bickerings, and disappointment.

The only result of this enterprising scheme was the introduction into the colony of about 3000 immigrants, who came chiefly from the island of Barbadoes,† and

* The planters were to pay two per cent. on amount of produce made, and other persons in proportion to their incomes. The total amount raised was 36,266*l.*

Demerara and Essequebo	£27,000
Berbice	9,266
	£36,266

† The *Superior* arrived on the 24th of May, 1841, with 200 Africans. The governor proceeded on board, and advising with the immigration agent, located

were distributed in various parts of the colony as field labourers. A few among this number (about seventy) were from the United States, but the views of the colonists were not satisfied, and, as we have seen, a controversy broke out between the official and colonial members of the Court of Policy and Combined Court.

The term of the civil list arranged by Sir Lionel Smith in 1835 being about to expire, the elective section refused to grant a new civil list, unless the colony was guaranteed a free immigration from all parts of the world.

His excellency the governor remaining equally firm against this measure, the "stoppage of the annual supplies," as we have seen, resulted, and a recurrence of the scenes of 1835 threatened to take place. But in 1841 a mediator was appointed to arrange the existing differences, and Sir Henry Macleod, governor of the island of Trinidad, arrived for the purpose. After some difficulty he negotiated the "new civil list," which was to continue from the 1st January, 1841, for seven years. An ordinance to this effect was passed on the 6th day of January, 1841.* The annual sum thus voted was 39,572*l.* 17s. 4d. sterling, equivalent to 187,549 dollars and 33 cents, which was distributed in the following proportion:

Civil List from 1841 *to* 31*st of December*, 1847.

The Governor (besides a residence)		£5,000	0	0
Chief Justice		2,500	0	0
Two Puisne Judges		3,000	0	0
Secretary to Chief Justice		630	0	0
Government Secretary	Held by the same gentleman	800	0	0
Secretary to Court of Policy		700	0	0
Assistant Government Secretary		1,100	0	0
		£13,730	0	0

them on thirteen of the best estates on the east coast. The same vessel sailed on the 7th of June, and returned on the 22nd of October following with 225 Africans.

* Local Guide, p. 679.

Brought Forward				£13,730	0 0
Clerks' stationery for Government Secretary's office and Court of Policy, besides contingencies				450	0 0
Attorney-General				1,100	0 0
Solicitor-General				300	0 0
High Sheriff				1,250	0 0
Clerk to ditto				300	0 0
Sheriff of Berbice				900	0 0
Sheriff of Essequebo				700	0 0
Ten stipendiary magistrates, each 700*l.*				7,000	0 0
Contingencies				2,400	0 0
				£28,130	0 0
Retiring pensions				2,012	18 0
Ecclesiastical archdeacon of British Guiana	£ 500	0 0			
Stipends of ministers of 15 parishes	6,250	0 0			
„ rector of St. George	569	4 10			
„ minister of St. Andrew's	569	4 10			
„ minister of Dutch Reformed Church.	569	4 10			
„ rector, New Amsterdam	486	2 5			
„ Scotch minister, New Amsterdam	486	2 5			
				9,429	19 4
Grand Total				£39,572	17 4

Such was the liberal provision made by the colony for the support of its principal officers and institutions. This civil list had a preferent claim upon colonial revenues, and was payable quarterly. The "king's chest" was abolished until the 31st of December, 1847, and the Queen's revenues made payable into the colony chest. The registrar's, marshal's, and sheriff's offices were subject to the regulation and control of the governor and Court of Policy, and all the fees and revenues (except salaries) were of course included under such control. The sum placed for contingencies was not to be appropriated to salaries, &c.

Ordinances were also passed "to levy a duty upon all imports into British Guiana," and for "authorising the appointment and regulating the duties of commissaries of taxation, in order to the better collection of the revenue." But as a kind of "set-off" against these ordinances, and the formation of so expensive a "civil list," the colonial party had accorded to them an "immigration

ordinance," which was first passed in January, 1841, and subsequently repealed in 1842, making way for another to "encourage immigration into British Guiana," &c. By this ordinance an annual sum was provided for the purpose by the colony; agents were to be appointed at several places* whence immigration might be expected, and salaries allowed them; an "agent general for immigration" was also appointed to reside in the colony, at a fixed salary. The duties of the several agents were also defined; certain bounties were allowed on all immigrants out of the public chest, and the rate of bounty fixed by proclamation. Thus by two proclamations, dated 5th of August and 10th of December, 1842, the following bounties on immigrants were payable under the above act, viz., from Sierra Leone, 35 dollars; St. Helena, 35 dollars; Rio Janeiro, 35 dollars; other parts of Brazil, 25 dollars; Spanish Main and Margarita, 20 dollars; United States of America, 30 dollars, &c. The labourers, on arrival, were to be provided with temporary support, and due preparations were made for them.

Having sketched the history of the immigration ordinance, we come now to consider its working, and the character and influence of the new labour-power introduced under its sanction. A formidable, though hitherto untried, competitor made his appearance to share the spoils of a country of such reputed wealth. The Portuguese labourer of the island of Madeira had, so early as the year 1835, attracted the attention of the planters, who about that period introduced the number of 429 into British Guiana. It was supposed, from their well-known industrious habits, and the fact of their being natives of a warm climate, that they would answer admirably for the cultivation of the estates. They were

* The agent at Sierra Leone was to receive 400*l.* per annum; the agent at Madeira 150*l.*

accordingly distributed in various parts of the colony, but the result of this, the first experiment, was unsatisfactory. A great many of them became attacked with fevers, ulcers, and other disorders, and a large proportion of them died. The survivors, however, amassed by degrees large sums of money, with which several returned to Madeira, to excite the wonder and cupidity of their countrymen, a circumstance which had a remarkable influence on the future prospects both of themselves and their compatriots.

The Portuguese have shown themselves for ages a restless and roving people; enterprising in spirit, and adventurous in their habits, we have already seen them, along with the Spaniards, exploring and visiting this country; behold them now again, but in a different capacity. Formerly they came to be masters; now they were satisfied to be servants and labourers. Formerly they came with the sword and the spear; now they were to wield the shovel and the cutlass. They have ever been willing to renounce their vine-clad homes for the perils of adventure and the prospects of gain. When, therefore, it became known to the simple inhabitants of Madeira that a rich tract of land on the not far-distant coast of South America was in want of labourers to cultivate its soil, and busy rumour had announced that wages were ten times higher in amount than in their own country, it is not to be wondered at that numbers of them, with their families, were found willing to embark for the "rich coast." It is not a little strange that this land, this same Guiana, so long spoken of for its riches by ancient writers and adventurous travellers (many, too, of their own nation), should again present itself, after an interval of about four centuries, as a second "El Dorado," and rise up suddenly as it were from the ocean to invite them to its shores. Forgotten in one

moment were their rocky mountains and luxuriant hills, festooned with the grape; without a sigh they bid adieu to the balmy atmosphere of the beautiful Madeira, and set sail with ardour for the mud-flats of the sugar country. The new comers were at first introduced at the expense of the colonists, until the immigration ordinances of 1841 and 1842 provided for their arrival, and gave a bounty of about 30 dollars, or 6*l.* per head, for each adult. Everything seemed in favour of the new immigrants. A vast field of labour was thrown open to them, a ready source of wealth to the industrious, and a climate in temperature and seasons not unlike their own. Possessed of the same character which elsewhere distinguishes their countrymen, both in person and habits, they exhibited to the negro a surpassing activity without much strength; light-hearted and merry in their dispositions, they were also intelligent, and remarkably keen as to their own interests; honourable and upright in their dealings, their manners towards their superiors were respectful and affectionate. Contented without luxuries, they cared little for personal appearance; the most simple food, the most humble dwelling, the most indifferent clothing seemed what they had been accustomed to; a want of cleanliness was unfortunately prevalent among them, and led in this climate to the most serious consequences. Superstitious and bigoted in matters of religion, they yet evinced an indifference towards its pursuit, and an ignorance of its duties which were surprising. Very few cared to attend the Roman Catholic church, but contented themselves with raising altars and burning candles before images and pictures of saints in their own dwellings. Naturally jealous and passionate, they were dangerous to quarrel with; more ready with the knife than with either argument or bodily force. Penurious in their habits, they hoarded up, or lent out on usury,

the money which they amassed by their industry and intelligence, or else invested it in profitable speculations, as we shall soon see. Fond of music, they enlivened their homes by the guitar, accompanied by the voice. A small kind of guitar, called by them "michette," is a very favourite instrument, with which, playing the most pleasing airs, they often perambulated the streets.

The earliest comers were for the most part from the very lowest classes of society in Madeira, and wanted polish in their manner; but they were all civil. In point of features there is a wonderful sameness in most of their countenances, the same dark black hair, aquiline nose, black eyes, and olive complexion, being common to them all. The men generally wore beards, which gave an antique cast to the countenance, and reminded one forcibly of the paintings of portraits in the sixteenth century. Their figures were robust, but not graceful or well-proportioned; many of the younger women were tolerably good-looking, but almost invariably spoilt by some unbecoming feature, or an indifferent figure, which they neglected surprisingly. The middle-aged and elderly females looked more like hags than mothers and wives. As a sameness of features obtained, so did the names by which they were known; scores of them had exactly the same Christian and surnames, which occasionally proved inconvenient in business and money matters; many of them, however, assumed fictitious names, and a habit prevailed among them of designating themselves by some familiar appellation or nickname, indicative of some supposed or apparent quality or habit. From the similarity in features, and from the prevalence of the same names, it seemed as if they were all descendants of a few original families, and to me it has often appeared as if they were of good descent, in consequence of the general cast of countenance being anything but "plebeian." So much

for the physical and moral attributes of the new immigrant; let us now consider his influence and career.

The Portuguese immigrants arrived in great numbers in the years 1840, 41, and 42.* In the former years about 4000 were introduced, in the latter about 400, and it must be allowed that they evinced the greatest willingness to labour, and considerable aptitude to learn. But the nature of the work was new to them, the implements unhandy, and the negroes did not let the occasion pass by without jeering them on their awkwardness. They forgot, in "cutting their jokes," the clumsiness of their African forefathers, and the fact that a willing hand is often worth more than a skilful one. The Madeirans had been able to earn in their own land about 4d. or 6d. per day, but in British Guiana they found they could earn as much as two to three guilders per day's work of six to eight hours (about three or four shillings). Their first impulse, therefore, was to tax their industry to the utmost. Unfortunately, the demand for their services was too urgent and general for much care to be bestowed upon the locality to which they were destined, and to the nature of the work to which they were called. Leaving a dry and mountainous country, the Portuguese immigrant encountered here a damp and marshy land; accustomed in his own island to the light work of the vineyard and the farm, he was required here to cultivate a stiff and clayey soil, with constant exposure to the sun or to the rain, and in the immediate vicinity of stagnant trenches. In his native country his diet, although humble, consisted chiefly of fresh vegetables and fresh fish, occasionally meat; his drink was water and the wine of the country; here his

* Owing, however, to the great mortality which occurred about this time, the governor and Court of Policy stopped for a time Portuguese immigration after March, 1842.

ordinary food was the farinaceous plantain and the dried salt-fish, and he was exposed to all the temptations of luscious but, for new comers, unwholesome fruit, which abound in tropical countries. In his retired cottage in Madeira, dirty and indifferent as it was, he saw little around him to excite his envy or cupidity; he moved among others whose lot of life was like his own, and to a certain extent he had felt contented; the ignorance of riches and the hopelessness of advancement had rendered him apathetic, if not satisfied. But in this new country, where it had been told to him that the streets were paved with gold and silver, he saw enough to stimulate his desires, and to urge him to contend for the possession of wealth. The curse of Mammon had seized upon his soul. Home, friends, country, were forgotten in the charm of adventurous enterprise, and thousands flocked hither only to meet a grave. Hurried away in gangs to the estates, no wise precautions were taken to ensure their usefulness. To be sure, experience had not yet proved the necessity for any such precautions. It was not long in arriving. "To the field—to the field," was the cry. To the field they went, in sanguine spirits and excited industry; they returned from it exhausted by the sun and fatiguing nature of the work. The miasm of an ill-drained land was immediately alert upon such unfavourable constitutions. Intermittent fever and ague broke out among them; the prickly heat (a species of lichen or skin disease peculiar to the tropics), and the small insects which abounded, attacked their feet and legs; inattention to such insidious and apparently insignificant assailants led them again to the field, but ulcers and disease were the consequence. The money which they received for their labour was not spent in good or sufficient food necessary to sustain them. They lived upon the cheapest plantains and the common salted fish;

but they paid dear for their economy. The money was hoarded until its value became incapable of saving them. They thought to have reached the mark, but the race was not yet over; they thought to have conquered, but the victory was not yet complete. The fever had become their daily companion; it wasted their energies and their bodies; it was followed by sallow complexions, congestion of internal and important organs, dropsy, emaciation, and death. The small scratch or ulcer, from irritation and neglect, spread into foul and sloughing sores, which involved in its ravages the tendons, the nerves, and the very bones, rendering amputation necessary. The unseen insect and the unconscious miasm had destroyed the ambitious and aspiring man. They looked to their employers for relief; sympathy was not wanting, and medical relief invoked, but where was found its benefit? an imperfect system of sanitary attendance rendered nugatory all their efforts. The dream had passed away. Startled into a fearful and stern reality, these victims of their own and others' imprudence hurried in numbers to the colonial hospital. The staff of that institution and the accommodation had to be increased to meet the augmenting claims. The patients crowded into its wards, they filled the apartments with their cries, they stretched themselves out upon their pallets, and in spite of the best medical skill and attention, they died unpossessed of that wealth for which they had sacrificed a life. Yet was the tale not altogether untrue which was told them; the picture had been correctly drawn, but somewhat too highly coloured. Some of the more careful earned money sufficient to enable them to return in a short time to their native land, to exhibit their wealth, and to stimulate others to encounter similar scenes such as I have attempted to describe. We shall shortly have to notice a similar

episode respecting coolie immigration in this history. The impression left on the public mind by the result of the Portuguese emigration was, that the inhabitants of Madeira was not adapted to this climate. But was the climate really to blame for all the evils consequent on the earlier emigration from Madeira? Was it, and is it really not adapted to the constitutions of European races? The answer to such an important question must be reserved for a separate consideration. Meanwhile, the importation of more Portuguese immigrants was stopped by orders from England, and the bounties discontinued in May, 1842, as likewise bounties on immigrants from the West India Islands in October of the same year; the cost of these immigrants, including the purchase-money and expenses of the steamer *Venezuela*, amounted to about 380,000 dollars.*

Immigration for the next year or two began to decline, in consequence of the recent disasters and experience, until attention was turned to Africa and the east for labourers suitable to the country, and about 500 in 1843 and in 1844 were introduced here, chiefly from Sierra Leone, the West India Islands, and a few from Madeira, who came at their own expense; but when in the following years the bounties were again renewed, in accordance with alterations and modifications in the several "immigration ordinances," crowds of immigrants flocked to these shores from Calcutta, Madras, Madeira, and elsewhere. It would be needless to enter upon another description of the Portuguese immigration; it would be a mere recapitulation of the first one; the origin, the progress, and the results were the same. The money acquired by some of the more fortunate Portuguese who had returned with it to Madeira, had again aroused the

* Local Guide, p. xxxv.

cupidity of the poor. They had seen paupers go away and return comparatively rich. The name of Guiana was recognised as a promise of wealth, and a field for industry and success. The cherished recollections of youth, the sad tales about the pestilential climate, the dissuasions practised by the authorities and clergy of the island, lost all efficacy when contrasted with the display of wealth so rapidly acquired by some of their countrymen in the "nuova terra;" numbers with their wives and families again flocked to British Guiana, in spite of obstacles of every kind. The authorities of the island of Madeira, when first made aware of the emigration of the people, did not interfere to prevent them. They very prudently consented to the departure of the refuse of the town of Funchal* and its neighbourhood, and connived at the removal of the lazy and penurious mendicants, the incarcerated thief and vagabond, and the half-starved artisan. For these, and such like, formed a large proportion of those who first arrived in this colony. When, however, it was found that agriculturists and people of all classes were deserting the island, an attempt was made to discountenance it. None were permitted to leave without a passport, the price of which was gradually raised, until a few or none could purchase one. Evasion, as a matter of course, followed, and the people contrived to get away without passports. More energetic measures became necessary. No vessels were allowed to leave the island until they had been inspected by officers appointed for that purpose. But this also failed; the immigrant vessels pretended to depart, but when nightfall came, tacked to another part of the island, where groups of Portuguese had been previously assembled by paid agents

* It is currently reported that the town of Funchal has thrice emptied her gaols to favour British Guiana with the occupants.

in the secret, who all eagerly but secretly rowed off to the ships, and were thus carried away to British Guiana. When this plan was discovered, an attempt was made to capture such immigrant ships, but they generally failed. The task was too arduous for the Portuguese navy, although instances are narrated where vessels have been retaken, and the immigrants brought back to Madeira when within a few days' sail of British Guiana.

It soon, however, became evident that agriculture was not the *forte* of the Portuguese; they were not altogether suited for it either by physical constitution or mental inclination. The hope of gain had driven the emigrant to these shores; necessity and the prospect of gain had kept him for the earlier periods of his sojourn here in the cane-field, but in time his continued industry and thrifty husbandry found him in the possession of a large sum of ready money. Those who had contrived to amass such money were not long in discovering the means of investing their gains to advantage. From the earliest period of the colony it had been the custom of the inhabitants to have their wants supplied by the merchants, who, besides being engaged in shipping and a general mercantile business, kept large stores (as they are here called), where almost every article for the household and table use could be procured. From a cargo of lumber to a paper of pins, almost every necessary article was to be sold at one or other of such stores. Some dealt chiefly in dry goods and hardware, others in provisions, wines, &c. But in after times medicines and groceries were disposed of in druggist establishments, called "doctors' shops," whose retail trade consisted chiefly in the vending of drugs, spices, paints, groceries, and other similar articles. In times of slavery it was found convenient to purchase wholesale or in large quantities the articles necessary for the estate and negroes. The few

private families who resided in town were also compelled to purchase goods at a high price, and in larger quantities than were often convenient. It is true that money was then plentiful, and this inconvenience but slightly felt. Since the emancipation, however, and the striking asunder of the great distinctions which formerly existed between the master and his dependents, a middle class was rapidly rising into notice. Money became less easily procured, and parties more careful and attentive to the manner of housekeeping. It was soon found that the old mode of purchasing articles was inconvenient and expensive. Those with small means and limited incomes felt it ruinous to buy goods at the larger stores, where scarcely anything could be procured for less than the silver coin, called here a bitt (value 4d.) The want of a smaller coin, copper or otherwise, added to the difficulty, and had no doubt contributed to the extravagance with which money was got rid of by the West Indian, both here and abroad, until the sad change in their prospect demanded a more careful economy. The want of small shops for retailing the necessaries of life, such as bread, butter, sugar, candles, soap, &c., was urgently felt, but yet it had never entered into the thoughts of the creoles to adopt such a desirable and useful retail business. The Portuguese, however, at a glance, saw how money was to be made by such apparently insignificant means, and accordingly opened a number of petty shops, where the smallest possible quantities of perishable articles of food, &c., could be procured by the town's people with but trifling inconvenience. Water-street was to be no longer the only refuge of distressed housekeepers and poor people. The most public places, the most crowded districts, the corners of streets were soon tenanted by the sharpsighted and trafficking Portuguese, who, behind their small and dirty counters, began to amass large sums

of money by the sale, in small quantities, of salted provisions, rice, flour, potatoes, fish, beer; in fine, everything needed by the individual who "kept house." The want of a smaller coin prevented them from doing more than they did, but even as it was the poor could procure two or three different articles for a bitt, while those articles which before had been always sold in bulk, such as flour, beer, rice, &c., could now be procured in small quantities. This was but a prelude to the display of their commercial spirit and enterprise. The success attending their town speculations led them to adopt the same system in the country, where the poorer classes had experienced still greater difficulty than those in town of procuring the articles necessary to their comfort. Shops sprung up like magic in all parts of the country; the most distant estates, the most remote districts, were visited by the untiring Portuguese,* who set themselves down with as much confidence in their new pursuits as if they had been all their lives engaged in such a traffic. A few houses, a neighbouring estate, were inducements enough for the owner of a shop to settle and make sure of a remunerating profit. It is true that such profits were small, but as they sold their goods rapidly, and their expenditure was not great, they, most of them, contrived to realise large sums. The gross income of such shops was from 20*l.* to 30*l.* per week; of course in time the great competition among them diminished the success of such speculations, but to this day the system is pursued with untiring energy and tolerable remuneration. Not content with purchasing goods from the merchants' stores, and stocking such shops, liquor stores, &c., many afterwards imported goods on their own account, and rented houses in Water-

* A Portuguese has actually established a retail shop in a corial moored in the centre of the river Demerara, at the foot of the Great Fall, about 100 miles from Georgetown.

street, where they either retailed to their countrymen or competed with the British merchants. Again, many became hucksters, and carried on their shoulders the most marketable goods, such as linens, handkerchiefs, osnaburgs, shoes, &c., to the different estates and free villages which were now springing up throughout the colony. They did not wait for the negroes to come to them, but fairly went to the negroes, and with all the temptations of a huckster's pack, drew forth the silver accumulated in many a miserable-looking hut. The money thus acquired was not spent in idle finery or unprofitable dissipation, but enabled them either to extend their business or to return to Madeira. Many, by such and similar means, became affluent and independent in the course of a few years.

Such is a sketch of the origin, progress, and result of Portuguese immigration. With all its impediments and accidents it has proved of essential service to the colony; it has opened up new resources of enterprise and commercial advantage, it has introduced an active and industrious race, who will not readily yield up the hold they have already taken upon society, but who, if I am not mistaken, will exercise in future years an important influence in the land to which they have emigrated, and in which they have now become acclimatised and naturalised. Upon many estates in the colony gangs of Portuguese labourers are peacefully and industriously employed. The demand for them is evidently on the increase. Greater care and attention are bestowed on them by the proprietors, and to their presence and industry the successful working of many fine estates is greatly to be attributed.

Their example and conduct have not been unproductive of good to the creole negro, in whom have been excited feelings of emulation and rivalry. It was a new

thing for the newly emancipated slave to find placed on the same level with himself a stranger from an European and civilised country—to witness the white man competing with him in the labour of the cane-field, and to see him subject to the same necessity of manual labour and drudgery. It was a new era in his life to test his powers of intelligence and endurance with the European labourer; but still no marked feelings of distrust or jealousy were awakened in the good-natured bosom of the negro. He had marked the introduction of the stranger with an indifference bordering on apathy. His self-interest had not materially suffered by the competition; his position in society had not been injured by the contact. His own path to independence and comparative affluence was too clear to occasion him any fear. Naturally good-natured and sensible of justice, the creole negro seemed devoid of the lively, excitable temperament of the inhabitant of most warm climates, and, although violent when roused, was (and is) generally stoical and passive in his philosophy. He would laugh at his new rival, and was sometimes shamed by his superior activity and intelligence, but rarely opposed him with any serious intent to do him mischief. Secure in his own self-conceit, the negro affects to despise the mercenary and hard-working Portuguese; he taunts him with the appellation of "white nigger," and pretends to be his superior in education and good breeding; indeed, it is not an uncommon thing to hear the Portuguese address the negroes as Sir, Maam, and the terms of black lady, black gentleman, are commonly made use of by them.

We come now to review shortly the history of coolie immigration. The efforts of the planter to procure labour were directed in this instance towards the east. It had been long known to many of them that there was a tract of country in India to the north-west of Calcutta,

between the 23rd and 25th deg. of north latitude, inhabited by a race of hardy agriculturists called "hill coolies," Dhangons or Boonahs. These "culi," as they are termed by Dr. Prichard, "are found in the hill countries of Guzerat," and, accustomed to agricultural pursuits, had not sufficient scope for their exertions, and it was supposed that they would willingly travel to the richer and more prosperous shores of Guiana. About the year 1838 the experiment had been made of importing a ship-load of them from Calcutta, who, to the number of about 400, soon found employment on the estate of a rich proprietor. They appeared to answer very well, and, in consequence of the success of the undertaking, it became a subject for future consideration how to introduce these people in greater numbers into the colony. When, therefore, the several "immigration ordinances" allowed of such an attempt as a public measure, agents were appointed in India to provide the necessary supply of coolies, and ships were engaged to bring them from the far-distant peninsula of India to the fertile lands of British Guiana. The bounty payable on each adult coolie was 60 dollars per head, or about 12*l.*, which, in the event of a vessel bringing 300 or 400 along with a cargo of rice and other East India products, made it a very profitable speculation for shipowners. But, unfortunately, the error was again committed of shipping an improper class of persons. The agents, glad to execute their business as summarily as possible, did not take the trouble of securing the services of really effective labourers, but, indifferent to the interests of all but themselves, collected the first people that presented themselves. Many were not "hill coolies" at all; men and women, the offscourings of the streets of Calcutta and Madras, the indigent, the idle—in fact, the very dregs of the community, were huddled together and forwarded to British Guiana as hardy labourers. Whole families

of paupers, sickly and emaciated, were glad enough to be carried out of India, with the prospect of being supported elsewhere. The old and helpless, infants and greybeards, were sent to till the soil of the rich country that could afford thus to squander away its money. A majority of them were never accustomed to field labour, but, hanging about the town, had eked out a miserable existence as grass-cutters, cattle-minders, grooms, smiths, pedlars, and petty artisans; many were hereditary beggars, and several ex-Sepoys: what could be expected from such an assortment of ill-chosen people? Of about 9000 or 10,000 who formerly arrived here, scarcely a tenth part was of the right class of persons. The better hands were from Calcutta, and between these and the people from Madras a kind of rivalry existed, the former looking down with contempt upon the others. The individuals thus added to the social family of British Guiana are a true type of the Malay race, one of the five principal divisions into which the human race has been classed by the scientific Blumenbach. Brown in colour, with regular features and long black hair, the coolie forms a remarkable contrast with the original inhabitants of these shores, although, as I have before remarked, many persons have traced a likeness between the "Buck" or South American Indian, and the natives of the east. The "coolie," for so we must still call him, is of a darker hue, taller, and more elegantly formed, with long and rather thin limbs, capable of much activity and grace, but not of strength. His hair is glossy and curling, not straight, as with the Bucks. In certain castes, the Mahommedan, it is shorn, with the exception of a long tuft at the crown, by which they hope to be pulled up into heaven at a future day. The head of the coolie is small and oval, not large and square, as that of the "Buck;" in the one it is well shaped, in the other clumsy. The coolies use a variety of languages; each tribe has its own

separate dialect, but they are all, I believe, reducible to one common root, the Hindostanee or Sanscrit. Their religion also varies; most of them are "Pagans," and at first were very superstitious in some of their rites, refusing to touch particular kinds of meat, and indeed meat at all, unless they had previously killed the animals themselves.

There is a great difference, however, between the coolies from Calcutta and Madras, which merits a passing notice. The Indian from the neighbourhood of Calcutta is in general of loftier stature, and of more elegant shape. The finely-shaped head, square shoulder, and beautifully-rounded limbs, especially of the women, are sometimes very striking. The features of many are singularly beautiful, and almost classical in outline. Some of the women are, indeed, strikingly pretty. Their clear brown complexions, bright eyes, long glossy black hair, and exquisitely-formed mouths, render them almost a study for an artist. Their figures are round, well formed, and graceful; and the picturesque costumes, both of the men and women, contrast very favourably with the untidiness of the negro, and the gaudy finery or dirty garment of the Portuguese. The men wear turbans of white cloth, or skull-caps of gaily-coloured materials, loose jackets, and flowing trousers of white or parti-coloured muslin or calico; at other times, long loose robes of white or striped raiment, which they have the art of disposing to the greatest advantage round their slender and elegant figures. Others are contented with folds of cloth girding the loins, displaying their well-proportioned limbs to great advantage; but when occupied in the labours of the field a very scanty wardrobe suffices. The women wear no head-dress; the dark glossy hair, well oiled and cleaned, is gathered in bands or folds around the head, but is never curled; it is retained by pins and fastenings of gold, silver, or other metal. The

ears and nose are perforated and loaded with rings of gold or silver, and armlets, bracelets, and rings on the fingers and toes are considered the height of fashion by the more favoured coolie belles. Many of the women and children have their earnings (dollars and other silver coins) melted and fabricated into huge bracelets, which in rows encircle their wrists and ankles, attesting their own or others' industry and love of finery. The bust and waist are fitted with tight vestments of muslin or other linen, while full and flowing petticoats of scarlet or other bright colour fall in graceful folds down to the ankles. Some prefer long scarfs, which are twisted gracefully around the bust and body, displaying more of the person than is considered becoming among more civilised nations. The more indigent, and the Madras females particularly, are satisfied with discoloured and dirty rags, which are somehow or other disposed mysteriously around their uncleanly persons, and barely preserve them from the charge of indecency. In their actions and conduct, the Calcutta coolies are more dignified and graceful, and appear to have mixed upon more independent terms with the rest of mankind than the more abject native of Madras.

In general, the coolies from Calcutta are preferred for field labourers, and on most estates where they have been located they have given satisfaction. Indeed, many planters speak very decidedly on this subject, and contend that there is the greatest difference between the two classes of people; and whilst they would hesitate in asking for, or receiving the services of, the Madras coolie, would most gladly avail themselves of every opportunity of forming their estates' gangs with the more willing and valuable labourers from Calcutta.

The following extract from a report of Sheriff Whinfield to Governor Light, written 29th of March, 1840, applies chiefly to the Madras coolie :

"I desire to avail myself of the present opportunity to set right the general misconceived opinion that these East India labourers are hill coolies. It is quite a mistake, for there is not a hill coolie in British Guiana; these people are chiefly from the following places:—Agra, Allahabad, Benares, Dacca, Delhi, Ingormauth, Lucknow, Naypoor, Patua. No person acquainted with their actual state in India could be otherwise than gratified to witness their altered and much ameliorated condition in this country." He also considered them as the parias of several large towns; outcasts in relation to their native country, and as here in a state of comparative dignity.

Indolent, dirty, and vagrant in their habits, the Madras coolies were inapt at the work for which they were intended, irregular in their attendance, and migratory in their ways; numbers abandoned the estates to which they were appointed to crowd about the town begging, and filling the most menial situations for a bare pittance. In any other country than this they must have perished in hundreds; but in this fine land, where nature provides sustenance even for the most lazy, they managed to subsist in many a strange manner. Some of them, not very particular as to their food, began to rival animals in their habits, and became the scavengers of society. Clothed scantily in the filthiest rags, their bodies rendered often disgusting by diseases of the skin arising from want of cleanliness, they prowled about the streets and country, picking up for food the putrid bodies of dead animals, such as goats, pigs, fowls, &c., and gathering from the dirtiest trenches a meal of the dead fish which in the dry season are cast up on the surface of the half-dried puddles. Such offal as was cast away by others as unfit to eat was greedily picked up by them, and carried home in triumph. And where was their home? The dried leaves of the palm-trees formed their bed, their covering was the shade of

some old building or umbrageous tree; their kitchen was the ground, in which they scooped a hole and made a fire of dried sticks or turf; their furniture and sole property a few pots of brass, which served them alike for basin, cup, dish, plate, and pantry. They ate in common; a large mass of whatever their food consisted was worked up into a kind of pulpy mess, around which they sat, and each of the company in turn thrust in his fingers in the form of a cone, with which they seized a large lump and duly conveyed it to the mouth; they were fond of tobacco, and made an ingenious kind of wooden pipe, which could allow of the smoke passing through water if desired.

The coolies in general are gregarious in their habits; a number of them fed and lived together, the proportion of women being small. The females had rarely large families. They recognised as their leaders some few persons whom they called "sirdars," and the influence which these had over them was incredible. The sirdar chose their place of residence, and at his will removed them to another. He received the money they earned, and arranged the rate of wages, expenses, &c. He compelled them to obey him by hard words, and often by blows. In many instances they were sadly cheated and deceived by these "sirdars," who led them in droves like cattle over the country, and thus assisted, if it did not originate, their unsteadiness of work and conduct. Hence has arisen the dissatisfaction and disappointment sometimes expressed towards them as a class of immigrants, and although in many places they have worked well, and by their numbers have not failed to be of service, yet on the whole the scheme of coolie immigration cannot be considered to have succeeded so well as had been anticipated. A similar conclusion has obtained in other countries where they have been tried as labourers. In Jamaica, the local government has, I believe, discon-

tinued their introduction at public cost. In Trinidad the experiment has not succeeded, and serious contemplation is entertained of not giving it any further trial. During the years 1846 and 1847 as many as 7000 or 8000 have been introduced into this colony, and, apart from the expense, what has been the result? Owing to them and the Portuguese, pauperism has been introduced into a land where, before their arrival, it was unknown, establishing, moreover, a bad precedent for future races, and setting a miserable example to the lazy and worthless. As regarded the coolies, they have likewise suffered from disease, consequent on the change of the climate. Eruptive disorders of the skin, opthalmia, and dreadful ulcers, have resulted from their want of cleanliness; they have become, along with the Portuguese, almost the only occupants of the public and private hospitals. But the more careful and intelligent among them have had every reason to be satisfied with the advantages of their new position. They were brought here at public expense, they had wages given to them for their work, which in few or no other country could have been obtained, and at the end of five years' residence here they had the promise guaranteed to them of being sent back to their own country *free of expense.* Many have already availed themselves of this promise; no doubt the remainder will if it be fulfilled. They have gone back to distant India with large sums of money, the earnings of a few years; they have traversed two oceans to find work, and have returned with the profits to astonish their countrymen with the almost incredible tale.

Several of the coolies who have retired from these shores carried away from 150 to 200 dollars each (30*l.* to 40*l.*) —a large sum, considering the short time they had been working in British Guiana.

In 1843, 169 coolies, exclusive of 10 women and 14

children, embarked in the *Louisa Baillie* for Calcutta, and entrusted their money, which amounted to 17,802 dollars, or about 3700*l.*, to Captain Rimington.

In the year 1838 about 400 coolies arrived from Calcutta; of these 236 returned to India in 1843, with about 50*l.* sterling each, about 7 absconded, about 98 died, and the remainder preferred to remain here.

Many have declared it to be their intention to return, bringing with them their families and friends; but it is very questionable whether the legislature of British Guiana can continue long to hold out such flattering terms as to bring a pauper from east to west, a distance of 8000 miles, and to offer him such work and wages as will enable him to return at the end of a few years in comparative affluence, and at the expense of the burdened colony.

Such have been some of the principal events in the history of immigration, and, reflecting upon the circumstance, we cannot but be struck with the energy and determination displayed by the planters to accomplish their purpose, and at the reckless and improvident manner in which it has occasionally been carried on. Never was a colony in greater danger than this for the first few years after the emancipation—never was a remedy more wisely conceived than that of immigration, to revive the drooping energies of the land. The planter may have been taunted by the lower classes that the system was established to support himself at their expense, and many have objected to the public money being appropriated to such a purpose; but it was wrong to infer that the planter alone was to benefit by immigration. The merchant, the professional man, the tradesman, aye even the labourer, would in the end derive advantage from an increase to the population. Let the cultivation of the estates once cease, and which among these classes would not have suffered by the occurrence? What other than

a vital necessity could have prompted to such expensive measures in regard to the introduction of immigrants? What other than impending destruction could have suggested what appeared so ready an escape? The creole labourer had been offered employment—he accepted it casually and upon his own terms, performing it irregularly; was it strange that the planter should anxiously turn elsewhere for labourers? None understood this better than the shrewd and intelligent negro. Of what use to him would have been his emancipation and civilisation if it consigned him to a nomade and vagrant life; if the channels of industry, commerce, and education thrown open to him were to be again unavoidably closed; if, with the withdrawal of capital, and the extinction of agricultural and commercial employment, the European race had been compelled to leave these shores, the genius of British enterprise retiring disheartened from an anticipated field of active employment? But immigration offered to fulfil every want; its promises were flattering, but its performances have been at times dubious. The majority of schemes of emigration have commenced in disappointment. Let those who doubt this turn to the early history of immigration in different parts of the world. The Canadas, New South Wales, Algiers, Western Africa, the Cape, &c. Certainly, Guiana has formed no exception to this rule; and why is this? Not because the principle of emigration is not sound and advantageous to all parties when properly conducted, but because exaggerated and often false descriptions on the one hand, and greedy cupidity and worthlessness of character on the other, have rendered abortive many a plausible system of emigration. In our own case, when the inhabitants of other countries had their attention directed to British Guiana as a promising land to emigrate to, whom principally did it interest? Certainly not those

who were well off in their own. The circulated descriptions of its wealth, its resources, and its advantages, were not altogether false, or grounded upon inaccurate data, but such reports dazzled chiefly the idle, the vagrant, the men of least character and usefulness in their own country. We have seen how such composed the mass of our imported labourers. No foresight in choosing them was adopted, no precautions taken in the proper use of them. Errors of all kinds crept into the system. The bounties offered gave rise to knavery and deceit; people actually in the colony have been again re-shipped, and the bounty twice received for the same individuals. Persons in business, and of respectable connexions, have arrived here and been paid for as immigrant labourers. Idiots and cripples have been included among those for whom bounties were payable, and dwarfs and deformed persons brought over on speculation to be exhibited. In one instance a miserable object, deformed with "rickets," was brought here in a basket three feet long and carried about as a sight, until the governor very wisely ordered her removal. The mortality among the Portuguese and coolies has excited the sympathy and sorrow of all classes, and the climate is charged with the whole and sole cause; but other and more important agents were accessories, which will be fully explained in the proper place. The immigration from Africa was, after all, the one most likely to prove of lasting service; but, to become so, it must be conducted in a very different manner to what it has hitherto been, or upon principles more sound and substantial than either that from India or Madeira. The majority of Africans who have arrived here have been emaciated and half-starved individuals, and more fit for the hospital than the field.

The current of immigration directed towards these shores has had obstacles and difficulties of all kinds to

contend against. It has been checked, subdued, and perverted; it has dribbled along at times, and at others been enlarged into a great stream. All young colonies require immigration; it is essential to their growth and to their strength. Let not the subject be abandoned because of its disasters; let not the system be abolished because of its abuses. It is calculated to be of paramount importance to a colony situated like this; it bears in it the germ of future greatness. Who can prognosticate the influx of such a tide? Its ebb and flow have already been marked with singular results. It has borne the name of Guiana to many and distant lands; it has excited interest and attention in many a humble and unknown hearth; it has instituted inquiry and knowledge. The idea has enlarged itself into a great principle, which has extended itself to many shores, and exercised its influence in many a heart. It has sustained, however imperfectly, the flagging energies of this declining country; it has maintained in its integrity the cultivation of estates; it has propped up a sinking planter, and supplied the vacant place of the retiring creole labourer. Without past immigration, imperfect as it was,* this colony could never have maintained its existence as a country capable of exporting sugar to a large extent; without future immigration there is little hope that it will ever become what it has been so often termed—a "magnificent province."†

Since the foregoing was written, a number of Chinese labourers have been added to the motley group of people in the fields of British Guiana. Preparations had long been made for their reception; an active and intelligent

* "After all that has been said of the levity of human nature, a man is, of all sorts of luggage, the most difficult to be transported."—*Adam Smith.*

† See Appendix for tables illustrative of immigration into British Guiana, from 1835 to 1852.

agent (Mr. White, formerly an opulent planter of this colony,) was appointed in India to superintend the transporting of these and other Indian immigrants.

From the 1st of January to the 30th of June, 1853, 647 Chinese men and boys, but no women, have arrived here, and have been located on several estates. It is as yet too early to speak of their value as agricultural labourers. They appear a sturdy, lively, merry-hearted race, but are low in the scale of moral advancement. They are an ignorant, degraded, and dirty people, but may improve under good example and tuition. Their characters are reported to be fierce, cowardly, and vindictive, by those who have brought them, but as yet they have manifested no symptoms of insolence or insubordination worth speaking of.

They suffered much from illness during the voyage, and the mortality has been great. Many since their arrival have likewise been attacked by eruptive disorders, sores, and fever. Their filthy habits and want of attention have contributed mainly towards this circumstance. It is to be hoped that the future importation of Celestials will comprise a better and more useful class of people than that already received.

The serious evil of stocking the country too rapidly with ignorant and degraded barbarians of all nations, may at some future day be developed to the misfortune of the colony.

CHAPTER XIV.

OBJECTS OF IMMIGRATION—ATTEMPT TO REDUCE WAGES—SUBJECT OF WAGES—NATURE OF FIELD WORK—METAYER, OR METAIRIE SYSTEM—ITS RESULTS—EVENTS OF 1843, 1844, 1845, AND 1846—EXPERIMENTS ON THOROUGH DRAINAGE—EVENTS OF 1847 AND 1848—DISPUTES BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR AND MEMBERS OF THE COMBINED COURT — RETIREMENT OF GOVERNOR LIGHT — WILLIAM WALKER, ESQ., ACTING AS LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR—STOPPAGE OF THE SUPPLIES — ARRIVAL OF GOVERNOR BARKLY — RELATION OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION—ITS RESULTS—RETIREMENT OF GOVERNOR BARKLY—ACCESSION TO OFFICE OF LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR WALKER.

THE main objects of the expensive and persevering course of immigration, to which attention has been drawn, were twofold: first, to supply the declining ranks of the working peasantry; and second, to lower gradually the rate of wages consistent with the altered circumstances of the times. Both of these intentions have been partially fulfilled; yet some evil is found mixed with the good; if immigration has not fully realised the results expected of it, there can be no doubt it has been productive of many advantages. The best way to estimate these advantages is to compare, not what immigration has accomplished with what it was expected to accomplish, but the state of the colony under its operation with what a colony would probably have been left to its own unassisted resources. Immigration may not have relieved or strengthened a colony to the extent

anticipated, and even now the prospect of complete success in the future may be considered problematical; but it has enabled the country to struggle through a season of hazard and calamity, it has confronted the most pressing symptoms of alarm, and averted the impending danger. It has perhaps only sustained the machine it was brought to propel, but without it the probability is that the machine would have become incapable of working. It may, indeed, only have allayed the malady it was intended to cure, but without its timely assistance that malady might have ended fatally. It has supported the sinking planter, and inflicted no injury on the industrious peasant. If it has introduced some objectionable elements into society, we should not forget that it has also preserved it from anarchy, perhaps from dissolution.

Anxious to test the supposed power of immigration, and fully alive to the necessity of greater economy in the management of estates, the planters in 1842 made an injudicious attempt to reduce the rate of wages; certain rules and regulations relative to the quality and quantity of work, the employment of time, and the remuneration deemed sufficient, were drawn up by some members of the "Proprietary Body," and the introduction of these rules was attempted to be enforced. The labourer, however, indignantly refused to submit to them, and a "strike" occurred in Demerara and Essequebo, which lasted about six weeks, and ended by the withdrawal of the obnoxious rules and regulations. In this, the first conflict on the subject of wages, the labourer proved victorious; the prestige of victory was long afterwards to remain with him, and the helpless condition of the planter was made known to the triumphant peasant. This single circumstance speaks volumes as to the altered position of the two parties. Eight years had scarcely elapsed since the emancipation, and already was the

labourer independent of his employer. Still more substantial proofs of this will soon be adduced. The complete helplessness of the planter was revealed by this "strike;" the work of the plantation was obliged to be continued, however ruinous in price, or else a sacrifice of property would have been the result—a sad alternative to the late opulent proprietor, but at the same time a salutary lesson, that compelled the introduction of economy and a more careful supervision in every department of the estate.

The subject of wages was one of the most intricate questions that arose out of the emancipation, and being a new element in our history, requires some further notice.

Since its general adoption after 1838, it had always been the ground of contention between employers and employed—the apple of discord thrown among the inhabitants of these colonies by the goddess "Freedom." It was the first real evil to the planters, the earliest appeal from his independence and long-established power. The subject has been argued keenly by the two great clients in this cause, master and servant. Each has advanced arguments satisfactory to himself, but of no efficacy in settling the point in dispute. The labourer is as jealous now of his strength, and as imperative to obtain the maximum remuneration for it, as he was at the commencement of the experiment; and the planter more than ever solicitous to reduce his pay-list. When the last trace of slavery had disappeared, and the labouring population and the proprietor of land were left wholly to themselves, their mutual dependence one on the other soon led them to enter into arrangements; but, as was very natural, the party whose interests were most at stake was the one who had to make the greatest concession; hence, to avoid the most serious consequences to

their property, labourers were employed upon estates at rates and upon a system which only the bygone profits of slave time could support. It seems anomalous to assert that the working classes were more independent of their employers than the latter of them; but the social features of this country differ so widely from those of other communities, that reasoning by analogy is not only useless, but delusive. Many of the negroes had become possessed of small lots of land; others had accumulated a little money; others found a ready livelihood in petty trading, fishing, and handicraft. The younger children and females had retired from the working of the field, so that of the 80,000 creole labourers existing at the time of the emancipation, perhaps not more than one-fourth cared to seek for employment in the field. These very persons, too, were without any imperative compulsion to labour; they had been allowed to occupy free of rent the houses formerly appropriated to them whilst slaves; they were at liberty to catch fish from the trenches; to shoot over the estate; and a day or two of occasional labour supplied them with the necessaries of life. The abrupt withdrawal of so much labour was the greatest shock that the welfare of the colony could have received, and it would require years to rally from its injurious effects.

In engaging the labourer in his new capacity of hired servant, the fault was committed of paying him, not as it is done in other countries, for a fair day's work, but by task-work, or jobbing; it may be argued that to have paid the negro for a day's work, leaving to his own industry and opinion the quantity he might think it necessary to do, would have been to encourage him in his indolent habits. I do not think so. The dilatory and idle could have been refused payment, and by the explanation and counsel of magisterial authority it would

most likely in the end have led to the best results. Instead of fixing a fair payment for a fair day's work all through the plantations, it became the custom, when a job was to be done, such as digging trenches, clearing and weeding fields, or cutting canes, to apply to a headman, who, having a gang at his command, contracted for the work, and, as a matter of course, made it as profitable as possible to the people and himself. These task gangs would wander about the country, and even when one job was commenced would leave it for another that held out more advantages. The bad habit of sauntering from place to place was confirmed; the labourers who composed these task gangs lived at a distance from their work; they dwelt in small villages, or on the outskirts of towns, and, when required by their headman, would assemble and travel to the scene of labour, where, after working for three or four days, they dispersed to their homes, to meet again the next week. A tariff or scale of work had been suggested by the late Sir James Smyth, and was executed by a committee of planters at the commencement of the apprenticeship; and, although not legally binding to either party, was recommended as an approximation for the guidance of the peasant and those appointed to decide in differences which might arise upon the subject. It subsequently became a kind of rude model for future agreements, with this exception, that the time devoted to labour rarely or ever approached, after the abolition of the apprenticeship, to that specified in this scale.*

Description of work.	To be performed in 9 hours.	Ditto in 7½ hours.
Digging canals 12 feet wide and 5 feet deep, and throwing the ground on both sides . .	... 600 cubic feet	... 500 cubic feet.
Throwing back a 6-foot parapet from the above, and levelling the ground	... 72 feet in length	... 60 feet in length.

* Local Guide.

Description of work.	To be performed in 9 hours.	Ditto in 7½ hours.
Digging new trenches as above, when the ground is all thrown on one side	... 480 cubic feet	... 400 cubic feet.
Throwing back 6-feet parapets from above	... 48 feet in length	... 40 feet in length.
Digging drains 2 × 2, land cleared	... 18 roods	... 15 roods.
Throwing out small drains shovel deep	... 50 „	... 42 „
Holing or banking land 2½ × 2½	... 36 „	... 30 „
Shovel ploughing new holed land one shovel deep, and rounding beds	... 72 „	... 60 „
Hoe ploughing, and planting one row of the above, with two rows of plants on parapets	... 60 „	... 50 „
Weeding, moulding, and supplying plant canes	... 90 „	... 75 „
Weeding and moulding plant, 2nd time.	... 100 „	... 86 „
Weeding and moulding ratoons	... 120 „	... 100 „
Weeding and trashing canes	... 120 „	... 100 „
Cutting and carrying canes (18 roods)	2 labourers to load a punt 28 × 7½, and 3 ft. deep (600 cubic feet)	500 cubic feet.
Cutting and carrying canes for one hogshead of sugar per diem	... 11 labourers	... 13 labourers.
Relieving and trying trash (ratoons)	... 120 roods	... 100 roods.
Supplying only first time	... 120 „	... 100 „
Shovel ploughing cane rows two feet wide.	... 60 „	... 50 „
Drilling two feet wide, one shovel deep	... 36 „	... 30 „

PLANTAIN CULTIVATION.

Weeding and trimming walks	5 labourers to 1 acre	... 6 to 1 acre.
Digging plantain suckers	200 each labourer	... 160 each labourer.
Digging holes 15 inches square	120 „	... 100 „
Planting ditto	150 „	... 125 „

Cutting firewood and cording ditto (20 roods), 128 cubic feet, or 8 × 4; 107 cubic feet, or 8 × 4.

N.B.—The rood mentioned in the foregoing is nearly equal to 12 feet 4 inches of corded wood.

The tariff for cotton and coffee cultivation is not noticed, because little or no labour was devoted to their production.

By following out steadily such an employment, a labourer could not only acquire means enough to support himself and family comfortably, but a surplus would remain to the prudent with which they might purchase houses, lands, boats, horses, or whatever they pleased, to minister to their comfort or enjoyment.

Let us see what those means were which were thus

acquired. For cutting a punt-load of canes he received a dollar (4s. 2d.); for clearing a field, which consisted in little more than scratching the surface of the soil with a hoe—a species of agriculture which would be laughed at in other countries—he received at the rate of two guilders per 100 roods. For supplying canes (90 or 100 roods) about two guilders.

When engaged about the buildings in the manufacture of sugar, the pay was from two to three guilders per day; so that the least he received for his day's labour was half a dollar. It should not be overlooked, that some of the work to be done was heavy, and that the rate of living in this country was unusually high; but, admitting these facts, let us see what a labourer could then do with his money.

House-rent at that time cost him nothing, fuel nothing, clothing very little, taxes nothing.*

But, independently of their wages, most of the labourers on the estates could add to their means by raising provisions, cutting grass, catching and selling fish.†

In consequence of the altered position of master and servant, a new principle in agriculture (at least to this country) was introduced, and one which, in all probability, will exercise a great influence in succeeding ages. This was the "Metayer" or "Metairie" system; under

* The following table will give a rough sketch of his living:—

Expenses per week.				Earnings per week, average.
Two bunches of plantains	2	guilders or	3s. 4d.	3 to 4 dollars,
Sugar, 2 lbs.	0½	„	0s. 8d.	say
Salt-fish, 2 lbs.	1	„	1s. 8d.	15s. 0d.
Bread	1	„	1s. 8d.	less expenses 9s. 8d.
Coffee or other drink	0½	„	0s. 8d.	
Tobacco and sundries	1	„	1s. 8d.	
			9s. 8d.	5s. 4d.

† Since the above was written, many changes have taken place; a labourer's earnings amounts in ordinary to about two dollars per week, and he has sometimes to pay for house-rent, but the price of plantains, salt-fish, &c., is considerably less than in the above estimate.

which the proprietor, finding it impossible or unprofitable to advance money in the shape of wages to carry on the cultivation, was satisfied with farming a portion, or the whole. The arrangement was generally as follows:— The proprietor divided his estate into lots or small farms, which were allotted to intelligent labourers, with the understanding that they were to keep in good cultivation the land thus taken over by them, and to receive half the value of the sugar or other produce raised. The farmers had under them, or aiding them as partners, a number of labourers who assisted in the work. The land was now to be kept in order for the interest of the labourer, and it was expected that they would in consequence attend to it whilst the proprietor undertook to keep the buildings and machinery in good repair. In the case of a sugar estate, the whole of the rum made was the perquisite of the proprietor, and in case of any difference on the subject of the cultivation, arbitrators were appointed, to whom the matter was referred. Such is a sketch of the Metairie system, the indication of a declining planter and a rising peasant, which has received the sanction and approval of the Secretary to the Colonies, and of which at first so much was expected; but after all it is nothing more than the old system of landlord and tenant. With steady, intelligent labourers, and in circumstances where the planter was compelled to seek such a resource, it has undoubtedly its advantages. A property would be thus sustained which might otherwise sink. An impoverished proprietor could thus retain his estate, which otherwise he might have to part with. As regards this colony, in several instances where it has been tried, the results have been pretty much the same. At first it promised well, and answered expectation; latterly many disadvantages have been found out, and, strange to say, the employment of the system seems rather

a "dernier ressort" to both planter and peasant than the adoption of a promising scheme. The reasons for this are various. The planter does not easily relinquish the idea of fortune-making so long associated with estates. He struggles on, and hopes to the last, under the old order of things, whilst circumstances have rapidly altered. Again, it is difficult to meet with labourers willing and speculative enough to enter upon any such agreement; they appear unwilling to believe the advantages which would accrue to themselves, and regard such proposals with distrust and suspicion. They prefer an independent, roving life, with four days' labour in the week, to the anxiety and uncertainty attaching to such novelties. The demand for labour and its remuneration being so great, they naturally preferred to work in task gangs or on choice estates, to being tied down to one particular spot; and it is very questionable whether, as a labourer, he could not and cannot gain more than as a farmer, and he therefore feels unwilling to subject himself to the vicissitudes which he has seen affect the landlord, such as bad seasons, short crops, low prices, &c. Again, the rapid introduction of immigrants has, more or less, interfered with such a scheme, for these latter held out the prospect of maintaining the cultivation under the old system, and, as a class, have evinced little disposition themselves to enter upon any such arrangement, although, in all probability, when the subject is better understood by them, they will gradually do so.

Even to the proprietor its success has been problematical. It is true his land was kept in cultivation, his account for wages removed, his anxieties perhaps lessened, but he still suffered from the experiment. His profits were necessarily small, the work not always done as he wished it; disputes arose about the time and mode of cultivation; there was the unpleasantness to have to

consult with ignorant and suspicious people; and, after a few imperfect and unsuccessful attempts, the Metairie system may be considered to have failed, and to be abandoned for the present.

Early in the year 1843, Lord Stanley wrote to Governor Light, acquainting his excellency that it was the intention of her Majesty's Government to take under their immediate superintendence and control all future emigration from the west coast of Africa to the West Indies. Vessels were soon chartered for this purpose to convey immigrants to Jamaica, Trinidad, and British Guiana, and the *Arabian*, of 391 tons, arrived here shortly after with Africans.

In the course of this year many useful regulations were introduced into the colony. A bill was passed for the registration of births and deaths, in which it was ordered that, if such registration was not performed within forty-eight hours, a penalty would be enforced from 25 to 100 dollars in amount. This bill, however, was not very likely to be strictly attended to, and became afterwards almost a dead letter.

A penal settlement was established up the river Essequebo, for the reception of the convicts within the colony; proposals were subsequently made to the Court of Policy that it should also be used for penal convicts from Jamaica and other places, but the requests, in accordance with the feelings of the public, were refused.

In the course of this year the power of reforming the courts of justice, the orphan chamber, and office of registrar, was granted to the Court of Policy. In an address to the court on the 28th of August, his excellency the governor stated, in reference to these changes, that unlimited authority was given by her Majesty's Order in Council of the 3rd of April, and by the Secretary of State's despatch of the 12th of April, to amend and

reform the present system of civil and criminal jurisprudence.

The orphan chamber was to be abolished, and a new office in its stead was to be instituted, both in Demerara and Berbice.

The registrar's office was to be remodelled; the judicial department was to be separated from that of the notarial and registrial. In reference to these changes, his excellency observed—"In the changes now proposed, we need not have the dread of disturbing a system transmitted from remote antiquity; we are about to deal with partial and temporary alterations, which were begun and carried out without being based upon principle, and were never framed to work harmoniously together, as parts of a connected whole. In altering the constitution of the criminal court, an alteration of the criminal laws would become necessary; and for any change, therefore, we must look to the jurisprudence of England, the result, as it is, of the combined intelligence of ages, and improved and tempered by the humane and enlightened spirit of modern times; I propose, then, to adopt the whole body of the criminal laws." In these proposed important alterations no mixture of Dutch and English criminal law was to be allowed.

In the changes of the civil courts, the objects proposed were curtailment of law expenses and delays, and security to the creditor; the strict and honest fulfilment of trusts was to be required, while protection was provided for the widow, orphans, and minors, as well as to the honest but unfortunate debtor.

The thanks of the court were offered to the governor for this address, and an earnest assurance of co-operation on the part of all the members promised.

The onerous nature of the duties imposed upon the members of the Court of Policy has never been explained,

and may be here usefully pointed out. The most eminent and practical planters and merchants are selected to fill the election seats. Frequently nominated without previous knowledge or consent, these gentlemen are compelled to sit, or suffer a heavy pecuniary penalty. The loss of time and the important functions assigned to them, are attended with great inconvenience to many, whose extensive private business is materially affected by their public duties. It must be admitted, that the zeal and public spirit displayed by such of our colonists has been deserving of much more favourable consideration than they have been in the habit of receiving. They are liable to out-of-door censure, and to frequent attacks in the local newspapers. Their motives are often misunderstood or perverted, and their public acts and remarks excite anger and enmity against them rather than commendation. No one, however, who has lived in the colony can be ignorant of the vast amount of public service gratuitously performed by such honoured characters as Messrs. Croal, P. Rose, James Stuart, T. Porter, A. D. Van der Gon Netscher, J. Jones, A. Macrae, J. Gordon, R. Haynes, and many others whose names stand conspicuously in the annals of British Guiana.

It would be perhaps offensive to these and other parties who have contributed their time and talents to the interest of the colony, to particularise their acts, but in spite of occasional errors their public career has been stamped with celebrity, and deserve a more fitting tribute than the scanty notice of a cursory historian.

The year 1844 was marked by many public acts and schemes of considerable importance, indicating that some progress was being made in the social improvement of the colony.

In the governor's address to the members of the

Combined Court, his excellency adverted to the inconvenience experienced by the fact of the sanction of the court as regards the outlay of the public money terminating with the close of the past year. He had no apprehension that the revenue which would continue to accrue to the public treasury until the 30th of June next, would not prove sufficient for the ordinary expenditure, but proclaimed that his reason for desiring an earlier attendance of the court was, that its members might exercise practical control over the annual expenses dating from the commencement rather than the middle of the year; and having submitted the estimate to the consideration of the court, he congratulated them on the present satisfactory state of the finances, and also on the prospects of a good crop for the current year, closing his speech with certain proposed measures for the advancement of the interests of the colony.

In the answer of the members of the Combined Court to the speech of his excellency, they agreed with him as to the propriety of the reasons urged on assembling the court earlier than usual, but submitted that as one of the seats of the colonial section of the Court of Policy was vacant, it would perhaps be better for the interests of the colony that they should defer discussing the estimate until such vacancy be filled up, and until they had examined the public accounts of the revenue and expenditure of the year ending on the 31st of December last.

Several old offices were also abolished—as, for instance, the vendue-office; and the system of selling by auction was thrown open to competition under certain regulations. This was in conformity with the wishes of the inhabitants, for early in the year a petition of merchants and others remonstrated against the continuance of the former monopoly, and an ordinance was published the

next year making provisions for the appointment of auctioneers. The boards of orphans and unadministered estates being also abolished, indemnification, in the shape of pensions, was granted to the recorders of such offices, and the new office of administrator-general was instituted.

But besides these and other important changes, several useful societies were instituted and organised during this year—namely, an Agricultural and Commercial Society in March; the Astronomical and Meteorological Society in May; and the Natural History Society of Demerara in July.

The proposal to establish a grammar school was approved of by the Home Government; and it was suggested that the unclaimed balance of the Slave Compensation Fund should be appropriated to that purpose. This useful establishment was subsequently instituted, and has proved of considerable advantage to the younger classes of this community, whose parents find it inconvenient or too expensive to send them to Europe.*

* Several ordinances of great public importance were published during this year 1844; and a glance at a few of them may be useful in this place.

One declaratory of the law of this country concerning bills of exchange and promissory notes payable in this colony. Up to the year 1837 the law of Holland practised here did not hold endorsers of such notes responsible for their payment, but by the new regulation the same practice was to be followed here as obtained in England, and in the next year an ordinance appeared to assimilate the practice here to that of England.

Another ordinance was passed to provide for the remuneration of witnesses for attendance on trials before the supreme criminal courts of British Guiana.

Another ordinance extended certain provisions of a former ordinance, intituled "An Ordinance to regulate and encourage Immigration to Emigrants from parts or places in Asia, and to repeal the 11th and 16th sections of said ordinances." The introduction of Chinese labourers was also provided for by an ordinance published early in this year, and also regulations prescribed for their contracts. The bounty was to be for every adult thus introduced 65 dollars, and for children under 14 years old 32 dollars 50 cents; but it was long ere Celestials condescended to visit our shores. A bill was also passed to raise half a million of money for the general encouragement of immigration.

Another ordinance was published to establish administrators-general in the colony of British Guiana, the object of which was to provide offices for the looking after the estates of insolvent persons, as well as of those who died intestate;

Early in the year 1845, the governor having fixed a meeting of the Combined Court for the 9th January, in his address to the members adverted to the fact that the ordinance passed by the court last year on the subject of the "Immigration Loan" would not receive the royal sanction unless modified, and proposed that its reconsideration should take place at a meeting "dedicated exclusively to that specific object." There had been no objection made to the principle of the loan of 500,000*l.*; but certain details, which had also been ably pointed out by the late acting attorney-general, Mr. Arrindell, had been objected to by the Secretary of State.

In the reply of the members of the Financial Representatives, on the 11th, they expressed their regret at the disallowal of the Loan ordinance, and assured his excellency that they would proceed in the discharge of their duties in this important matter with every disposition to meet the views of her Majesty's Government, consistent with the maintenance of their

thus conducting, in an improved manner, the functions of the old Orphan Chamber, which was now abolished.

An ordinance to abolish writs of "Cessio Bonorum," to declare who shall be considered insolvent debtors, to provide relief for the same, and to ensure an equal distribution of the estates of such insolvents.

Ordinance to regulate the offices of the colonial registrars of Demerara, Essequebo, and Berbice, and to make provision for registering or recording therein certain deeds, acts, and instruments.

Ordinance to consolidate the supreme courts of civil justice, and to provide a new manner of proceeding to be observed in the said courts.

Ordinance to introduce into the colony of British Guiana trial by jury in certain cases.

Ordinance to simplify proceedings in the arrest of debtors leaving the colony.

Ordinance to regulate and establish tariffs or tables of fees and other charges in, and connected with, the supreme courts of criminal and civil justice in British Guiana, and for the remuneration and travelling expenses of witnesses and jurors in civil cases.

Another ordinance for requiring annual returns to be made and sent in for purposes of colonial taxation was likewise enacted.

In closing the session of the court, his excellency adverted with satisfaction to the numerous important acts of legislation passed, and complimented the members, both official and elective, but especially the acting attorney-general, on their assiduity and successful working out the details of difficult legislation, and considered that the community owed to each and every one obligations of no ordinary kind.

constitutional rights, and the promotion of the prosperity of the colony.

Upon this very subject, however, began a quarrel respecting the power of the Combined Court, which ultimately ended in an open rupture.

Earl Grey, in a despatch to Governor Light, published on the 2nd January of this year, having defined the origin and purpose of the Combined Court, alluded to the result of gradual encroachments permitted by successive governors, and contended that, by the Order in Council of 3rd June, 1842, that during the continuance of the Civil List ordinance of 1841, and no longer, the Combined Court should "possess full power and authority to discuss in detail, freely and without reserve, the several items of the annual estimate of the colonial expenditure, subject always to the terms and conditions of the said Civil List ordinance." In the preamble, however, of the Loan ordinance, Earl Grey conceived that the Combined Court had defined and declared its own powers beyond the authority from which they were derived, and their actual provisional and permissive character. In reference to this despatch, a resolution was carried by the elective members of the Combined Court, "That this court so far acquiesces in the doctrine laid down by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that its powers over a certain portion of the revenue now into the colony chest, but which formerly appertained to the sovereign for the public uses of the Colonial Government, are limited to the period embraced by the Civil List ordinance, and, therefore, an alteration in the structure of the Loan ordinance becomes necessary; but this Court maintains that to levy, fix, and appropriate the taxes levied in this colony, over and above the sources of revenue appertaining formerly to the sovereign's chest, and which may be revived at the

expiration of the Civil List ordinance, is the undoubted privilege of this court, and that in point of fact it has always been exercised by the passing, rejecting, or modifying, after full and free discussion, the respective items on the estimate, and the fixing and raising of the ways and means by an ordinance of this court."

The usual meeting of the Combined Court having been summoned for February 13th, his excellency, in his address to the members, congratulated them on propitious seasons, and their exemption from those evils which had visited their neighbours, for which a feeling of gratitude was due to the Almighty. He also alluded to the introduction of an agricultural chemist, and anticipated great advantage to planters through his advice, and the adoption of scientific agriculture. The finances of the colony were declared to be flourishing, and his excellency adverted with satisfaction to the royal assent having been given to the measures of law reform, and stated that on the 16th instant all the new ordinances on that subject would have the full force and effect of law. The governor then handed over the estimates to the members, who declined, however, to proceed to business until a vacancy occurring in the financial body had been filled up; which act having taken place, the usual reply was sent in to the address, in which the governor was thanked for his speech, and his views regarding the finances and agricultural condition agreed to, as well as the advantage likely to result from the law reforms so admirably enacted by the Court of Policy, with the able conduct of Mr. Arrindell especially. But, at the same time, the members contended that there was an unhealthy condition of the labour market, which could only be benefited by immigration; and trusted that such protective and liberal policy would be pursued towards them by the Imperial Parliament, as would enable them to

compete successfully with slave sugar-producing countries.

A prospectus was issued this year of a Demerara East Coast Railway, to run between Georgetown and Mahaica, a distance of about twenty miles. The capital proposed was 100,000*l.*, or 480,000 dollars, in 10,000 shares of 10*l.*, or 48 dollars each; further notice of which will be taken in the account of this useful undertaking.*

The year 1846, if in no other way remarkable in the history of the colony, was at least so from the alteration in the sugar duties, which the British Parliament, after the memorable discussions respecting free-trade, proposed to carry into effect. It would be out of place here to enter upon a formal notice of the wisdom or expedience involved in the great question of free-trade. That immense experiment of national policy which, in spite of all the dangers that threatened, and the dissatisfaction that would ensue, is likely to prove practically successful, or at least to remain until a better offers itself—the permanent policy of ministers—even of those who formerly assisted to prevent its realisation.

Among the numerous and valuable articles the importation of which was subjected to a considerable reduc-

* The following ordinances were published during the year 1845:

Ordinance to apply the surplus customs duties in aid of the general revenues of British Guiana during the existence of the present, or any future civil list.

Ordinance for establishing receptacles for lepers, and providing for their care, maintenance, and support.

Ordinance to admit the unsworn testimony in certain cases of Africans, coolies, and Chinese.

Ordinance to provide for the payment of the interest for the redemption of a loan of 500,000*l.*, to be raised for immigration purposes.

Ordinance for appraisement of houses and lots of land in the city of Georgetown.

Ordinance to revive and continue for seven years, from and after 31st of December, 1847, on which day it will expire, an ordinance, entitled "An Ordinance for granting to her Majesty the Queen a fixed Revenue for the support of the Civil List Government of British Guiana for a period of seven years."

Ordinances to confer on certain justices of the peace in the rural districts of British Guiana the powers at present exercised by the police magistrate of Georgetown, under ordinance No. 2, 1839.

Ordinance for amending the law of evidence in civil cases in the colony of British Guiana.

tion in duty, that of sugar alone merits notice in this place. Up to the month of March, 1845, the duty upon colonial Muscovado sugar was 1*l.* 5s. 2d. per cwt., and of foreign free-grown sugar was 3*l.* 3s.; while sugar, the produce of slave countries, was altogether excluded. The sugar bill of 1845 reduced the duty upon colonial sugar to 14s. per cwt., and 24s. for foreign; but on the 20th of July, 1846, the following table of duties was proposed, and up to the present time has been acted up to:

Date.	Colonial Sugar.	Foreign Sugar.
1846 to 1847	14s.	21s. 0d.
1847 to 1848	14s.	20s. 0d.
1848 to 1849	13s.	18s. 6d.
1849 to 1850	12s.	17s. 0d.
1850 to 1851	11s.	15s. 6d.
1851 to 1852	10s.	14s. 0d.
1852 to 1853	10s.	13s. 0d.
1853 to 1854	10s.	12s. 0d.*

At the usual meeting of the Combined Court, which took place this year on the 16th of March, the following remarks were made by his excellency in his address to the members of the court:—He adverted in the first place to a small increase in the sugar crop of this year compared with the last, and to the accession to the labouring population by the arrival of 3647 immigrants. That, nevertheless, there was a decrease in the number of arrests of 15 per cent. in comparison with the year 1844. The estimated population of the whole colony probably was about 120,000 persons. His excellency further stated, that the number of prisoners at the new penal settlement was 109 at the close of the last year; of this number 49 were convicted by the Superior Criminal Court; whilst 52 out of the whole number of prisoners were not natives of the colony. His excellency alluded to the approbation manifested by her Majesty's Government to the proposal to arm the police force with rifles,

* The present duties are—On colonial brown, 11s.; yellow, 12s.; equal to white clayed, 14s.; and equal to refined, 17s. 4d.; foreign brown, 11s.; yellow, 12s.; equal to white clayed, 14s.; and refined, 16s.

and also to establish throughout the colony a volunteer rifle corps. He also congratulated the colony on the arrival here of two scientific gentlemen, who proposed remaining in the colony some time. The one was an agricultural chemist, Dr. Shier, a gentleman of some considerable reputation in Great Britain. The other was an engineer, Mr. Catherwood, who had attained some eminence as a scientific traveller, and who came out to superintend the progress of the Demerara Railway Company. The balance in the chest to the 31st of December, 1845, was 262,025.95 dollars.

In answer to the speech of his excellency, the elective members of the Combined Court made the following remarks in an address dated 6th April:—That in their opinion there appeared to be a necessity for an increase and continuance of European troops, rather than for the re-establishment of a militia or volunteer force. They also differed from his excellency in making the balance in the public chest 2,521.45 dollars more than the sum stated.

There was nothing of importance which occurred during the early part of the year to merit any particular notice. The gloom occasioned in the colony by the introduction of the new sugar duties, and the fact of the sugar crops for the present year threatening to be deficient, owing to an unusual and protracted drought, induced serious considerations among the planters to strike a decisive blow at the present rate of wages, which they considered beyond their means to continue. Attempts were made to reduce them throughout the colony with more or less success; but in the island of Leguan there was a disposition shown by the peasantry on several estates to resist the imposition of the new rate. On the 17th September many of the labourers refused to work, and, collecting in noisy and angry groups, excited some suspicions as to their intentions.

The local magistrates, with several proprietors and managers, fearing a riot, applied to his excellency for assistance. A body of police and troops were immediately despatched to the disaffected spot, but had no occasion to proceed to active measures. A few of the ringleaders were placed in custody, and tried, but a lenient sentence was passed upon them. The active and intelligent Government secretary, Mr. Young, who had gone down to the island to inquire into the business, described it in a despatch, forwarded to the governor, as merely a brawl among civilians.

A little later in the year, Mr. Young retired from the colony, after a residence here of about ten years. This gentleman, whose father, Colonel Young, had been appointed protector of slaves in 1825, was possessed of considerable abilities, and by his knowledge of official business, and his conciliatory address, was of important service to the heads of the Government with whom he acted. Respected by the inhabitants as a man of sound sense and practical views, regretted by his colleagues as a skilful and experienced ally, and feared by his opponents as a profound and clever antagonist, Mr. Young left these shores with a high character for talent, address, and skill. On his arrival in England he was knighted for his services to her Majesty's Government, and appointed lieutenant-governor at the Cape of Good Hope; but has since been removed to a government in Australia.

During the course of this year the important experiment of thorough, or subsoil drainage, was tried by the agricultural chemist Dr. Shier, in order to test its applicability and efficacy in the cultivation of the sugar cane in this colony. Towards defraying the necessary expenses, the sum of two thousand dollars was granted by the Combined Court in 1845. A plot of ground on plantation La Penitence, the property of J. H. Albuoy,

Esq., was liberally granted by his representatives in this country to be the field of experiment. The land, about fifteen acres in extent, was accordingly cleared, drained, and cultivated under the immediate superintendence of Dr. Shier, and a committee of gentlemen appointed to watch and report on the result.

Subsoil tiles and a two-horse power steam-engine were imported from Europe, the latter to assist in the removal of the drainage water, in consequence of the want of a natural outfall. The use of the plough was put into requisition, and the canes planted. Nothing could have been more promising than the first results; the canes were large and healthy, and a larger return of sugar was obtained than from a tract of land of the same extent worked on the old or open drain system. But after the first crop, the experiment disappointed the supporters of the new system. The drainage proved inefficient, the tiles became choked up, the canes became weakly, yielded but little saccharine juice, and many of them rotted. After a cost of 5110 dollars, the experiment was considered to have failed, to the disappointment of its scientific superintendent, and the many gentlemen who were deeply interested in the great benefits it promised to the agricultural condition of British Guiana.*

* The following ordinances were published during the year 1846:

Ordinance to alter and amend the jurisdiction of the inferior criminal courts of British Guiana (February).

Ordinance to extend the jurisdiction of the inferior courts of civil justice of British Guiana (February).

Ordinance to repeal ordinance, No. 21, 1844, intituled "An Ordinance to consolidate the Supreme Courts of Civil Justice, &c., and to provide an amended manner of proceeding, &c." (April).

Ordinance to introduce into the colony of British Guiana the laws of England relative to larceny and other offences connected therewith (June).

Ordinance to abolish the office of vendue-master in the county of Berbice, and to extend the provisions of ordinance No. 9, of the year 1844, and of ordinance No. 4, of the year 1845, to the county of Berbice.

Ordinance to incorporate a company to be called the Demerara Railway Company, and to authorise the said company to make and maintain a railway in the

The beginning of the year 1847 was rendered memorable by the new criminal laws coming into operation. It was a novel and pleasing sight for Englishmen here to witness the introduction of trial by jury; the first case in which it was practised, and the excited and crowded appearance of the court of justice, will not readily be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

The seasons were good for the prospect of the sugar crop, but the feelings of the planters were gloomy and unsettled. Commercial embarrassments in England; a decline in the price of sugar; and the principles of free-trade and the sugar bill of 1846 becoming practically applied to the colonies, had the effect to depreciate the value of property generally throughout the colony; but in spite of all these forebodings the crop of this year proved the largest made since the emancipation. Desponding as the planters had become, they were not without energy—and thanks to their untiring efforts, and to the prompt aid supplied by immigration, this desirable result may be in a great measure contributed; they applied themselves with diligence to the economical cultivation of their estates, they sought earnestly for labour wherever it could be procured, and encouraged every attempt made to further immigration. Nor were their efforts confined to the attention of the plantations only. Disheartened at the threatened fatal consequences of the new sugar bill, they took measures to try if possible to avert the impending blow; by a thorough examination of the subject, and by a zealous co-operation on the part of the colonists, they endeavoured to obtain

colony of British Guiana, from the city of Georgetown, the capital of the said colony, to Mahaica, with extensions and branches, and for other purposes.

Ordinance to introduce into the colony of British Guiana trial by jury in criminal cases; amended in 1847.

Ordinance for regulating the rights, duties, and relations of employers and servants in the colony of British Guiana.

justice for themselves. An important meeting was held by the planters, merchants, and others on the 15th of October, at the rooms of the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society in Georgetown, the Hon. Peter Rose in the chair, for the purpose of collecting signatures to a petition to the Imperial Parliament, prepared at a preliminary meeting held on the 24th ultimo.

In this petition the grievances under which the colonists laboured were respectfully but earnestly submitted; the serious consequences, if not threatened ruin to their prospects, by the sudden and unexpected change in the colonial policy, were feelingly set forth, and prayed that the following remedial measures should be conceded to them:

1st. A loan to be applied to the carrying out of African immigration, under such regulations for securing the fair and equitable administration of the same, as your Honourable House may deem proper.

2nd. A loan to be applied under proper regulations to the purpose of thorough drainage.

3rd. The admission into the United Kingdom of Muscovado sugar, as a raw material, duty free.

4th. The free admission of molasses into the breweries and distilleries of the United Kingdom.

5th. The equalisation of the duty on rum and British spirits.

6th. The admission of inspissated cane juice into the United Kingdom.

7th. The placing the refining of sugar in the colonies on the same footing as in the British refineries.

The meeting was numerously and respectably attended, and a great many signatures attached to the petition, which was immediately forwarded to the Imperial Parliament.

The fate of this petition was unfortunate; it neverthe-

less drew the attention of the British Government, and that of several influential members of the House of Commons, to the suffering interests of the West Indies.*

The year 1848, the last in which I shall endeavour to chronicle the most remarkable events, proved a stormy and important one in the annals of this country. At its commencement gloom and discontent sat on the faces of all, in its progress confusion and discord prevailed in the Legislative Chambers, and at its close his excellency had retired from the administration of the colony, unhappily, however, leaving the community more or less in a state of anarchy and perplexity.

In the Court of Policy, which had numerous sittings, the elective members declined preparing an estimate for the present year, on the grounds of the uncertain prospects of the colony: "Inasmuch as the state of the colony at present is such, that no estimate that would be passed could be taken as a guide for the expenditure of the country for the financial year 1848-9, and therefore it is expedient to postpone it until it be seen whether the circumstances of the colony become changed for the better before the 15th of May." A proposal was also made in the Court of Policy to reduce all the public

* The following ordinances were enacted in 1847:

Ordinance to provide medical attendance and medicines for immigrant labourers.

Ordinance to provide a new burial-ground for the city of Georgetown.

Ordinance to extend the provisions of ordinance No. 10, of the year 1845, entitled "An Ordinance to provide for the Payment of the Interest, and for the Redemption of a Loan of 500,000*l.*, to be raised for immigration purposes."

Ordinance to repeal the duties of customs imposed on articles imported into this colony, under the Act of Parliament 8 and 9 Vic. c. 93, intituled "An act to regulate the Trade of British possessions abroad."

Ordinance for the regulation of the ferry across the river Demerara, and the steam-boats thereof.

Ordinance to repeal all laws repugnant to, or at variance with, any of the provisions of ordinances Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28, of the year 1846.

Ordinance to establish pounds throughout the colony of British Guiana, and to provide rules and regulations for superintending and keeping the same.

Ordinance to indemnify the governor and colonial receiver-general, and other public officers, for certain proceedings in regard to the depositing of public funds with, and receiving as cash, the notes of the two banks established in this colony.

salaries 25 per cent.—even those included in the civil list; but as this was objected to, on the part of the Government, as against the good faith of the colonists, it was urged by the elective members that the Civil List of 1841, to the 31st December, 1847, but renewed in 1844 for a further period of seven years, or to the end of the year 1854, was only granted under the impression, or rather conviction, that the exclusion of slave-labour sugar from the home markets were a fundamental principle of the policy of the mother country to which the faith of the nation had been irrevocably pledged, and that the civil list which at present exists would never have been granted if a departure from the Imperial commercial policy had been contemplated;

It was therefore resolved:—1st. That her Majesty's Government was therefore prayed that the salaries in the civil list should be reduced 25 per cent. 2nd. That rigid economy be practised in the public expenditure, all salaries above 700 dollars per annum being reduced 25 per cent.

These resolutions were seconded by a petition from merchants and others in favour of the views expressed; but, although forwarded to England, met with no favourable reception at the hands of the Secretary for the Colonies, who refused to entertain the prayer of the memorial; but before the result was known of an application which was made by the colonists to the British Parliament, his excellency had summoned the Combined Court for the 20th April, having previously, on the 10th, induced the court to pass an estimate, each item of which, however, was formally opposed by the elective members, who were anxious to hear the result of their application to the British Parliament respecting the civil list before proceeding with the business of the Combined Court. This step was taken on the part of his excellency in con-

sequence of certain resolutions which had been brought forward in the Court of Policy: viz., to decline framing an estimate and to vote the supplies, unless in accordance with the views of the elective members. At the meeting of the Combined Court, April 20th, the governor, in his address, regretted not being able to congratulate the members on the state of the colony, which, however, he did not attribute to the low price of sugar, but rather to the monetary failures among West India commercial houses. He adverted to the reduced price of work on the estates, and called upon members to fulfil their pledges in respect to the loans of money, and the support of engagements already entered into, closing his remarks with the statement that his further administration depended on the usual course being adopted.

An adjournment of the court to the 25th was asked for, to consider matters and furnish a reply; but members did not assemble again until the 26th April, when, in the reply to the address, the elective members expressed in very forcible and able language their dissent from the views of his excellency respecting a reduced rate of wages being generally in force, and dwelt on the depreciation of property and present prospect of ruin occasioned chiefly by the Sugar Duties Act of 1846. They further called his excellency's attention to the different aspect of the colony now to what it presented in 1838, when a tour of inspection had been made by his excellency on his arrival here. "In Leguan, in 1838, there were twenty-one estates in full cultivation, while at present ten are in a state of abandonment; one estate which at the former period sold for 32,000*l.*, has now altogether ceased to be cultivated." They complained of want of proper legislation in enforcing laws for the protection of property and the regulation of social order. They expressed their astonishment that his excellency

should have quoted the language of a free-trade minister, "That the people of England cannot afford to pay three millions sterling to keep up the wages of the labourers in the West Indies," and felt assured that they should be able to establish that Government, and not the colony, had violated the compact, and adverted to the following facts, viz., that on the 30th December, 1847, the sanction of the Secretary of State was asked to reduce the salaries on the civil list 25 per cent. That on the 29th February, of the present year, the framing of the estimate was postponed to 15th May, and the reasons of the elective members for so doing were placed upon the minutes of the court on the 1st March, at his excellency's request. That on the 21st March they received Earl Grey's refusal to accede to the proposed interference with the present civil list. That on the 10th April the tax ordinance was renewed, and members subsequently expressed their willingness to renew, for a limited time, the tax ordinance of 1847 (which would expire on the 30th June next); but declined to proceed with the estimate until the decision of Parliament upon their case be ascertained. Such were the views entertained by the elective members; and upon the termination of the reply, two resolutions were proposed:

1st. To defer the consideration of the estimate until 20th July.

2nd. To extend the present tax ordinance until 15th August.

The court was then adjourned by his excellency, who wished to consider this offer, until the next day.

On the meeting of the court, April 27th, the resolutions being allowed to be submitted, were carried; all the elective members of the Court of Policy and the financial representatives voting for them, and the official members, with the exception of his excellency, against

them. The governor then read a minute, declining to accede to the resolutions; but stated that he would accept a renewal of the tax ordinance for three months, from 1st July; but the elective members and financial representatives refused their assent, and placed their reasons for so doing on the minutes of the court; and after some discussion, the governor adjourned the court *sine die.*

As it was undoubtedly in the power of the Combined Court to reduce such salaries as were granted by them 25 per cent., the proposal to carry such reduction of salaries and wages was no longer confined to the Legislative Chambers, but operated to a certain extent throughout the whole of society. Wherever it was possible that such a reduction could be practised, it was put in force, and many individuals among officials, professional men, tradesmen, and others, were subjected to its operation; but when, in a like spirit of economy, the attempt was made on the part of the planters to reduce the wages paid to the labourers at a similar rate, the feeling of opposition and resistance was strong and violent. Several megass logies were burned throughout the colony, and whether owing to accident or design, the circumstance was so remarkable as to call forth a proclamation on the part of the governor; wherein, after an admonitory address to the labourers, he threatened them with the fatal consequences of such practices (if they indeed existed), and offered a reward of 2000 dollars to parties, not being principals, who would bring the offenders to justice.

His excellency the governor, finding it unlikely that he should be able to overcome the feelings of opposition existing in the elective members of the Court of Policy and financial representatives, relative to proceeding with the business of the session as usual, and having previously

made arrangements for his departure from the colony, took immediate steps for returning to England.

As soon as it became generally known that his excellency was actually about to retire from the administration, after the unusually long period of service of ten years, addresses on the occasion of his departure were diligently prepared and forwarded to him from various influential bodies in the community, viz.:—from the mayor and town council, from the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society, from the Astronomical and Meteorological Society, from the lord bishop and clergy of the diocese, and another from the Wesleyan ministers; to all of which his excellency returned his acknowledgments and thanks for the flattering terms in which they had addressed him.

After holding a parting levee, and receiving the farewell and good wishes of a large number of gentlemen of all shades of politics, his excellency, accompanied by Mrs. Light and Mr. and Mrs. Holmes (the elegant and accomplished Miss Light having lately been married to our popular townsman, Mr. Holmes), and escorted by a party of attached friends, proceeded on board the mail steamer *Eagle*, on the 19th of May, and amid the salutation of a large concourse of persons assembled to witness his departure, withdrew for ever from the shores of British Guiana.

Immediately on the departure of Governor Light, William Walker, Esq., the late Government secretary, was sworn in as lieutenant-governor.

Great as were the abilities, and extensive howsoever the experience of this gentleman, it must be admitted that the task which now devolved on him was onerous and difficult. It is not intended to follow up the subject of dispute between the executive and the elective mem-

bers of the Court of Policy and the Combined Court; it is sufficient to state that various meetings and adjournments took place; that the skill, talent, and perseverance of the one party was met by the ability, energy, and firmness of the other, but ended in no progress being made on either side; that society was agitated by the conflicting interests, until at last, indifference took the place of anxiety in the minds of the colonists; the fruitlessness of the opposition became more and more evident, but was maintained by the pertinacity of the colonial party, who still clung to the slender hope of being able to prevail against the wishes of the British Government; the negative of the Secretary of State had been declared against their endeavour to alter the civil list, &c.; the appeal of a large number of the colonists to the consideration of the British had ended in disappointment and mortification, yet still the refusal to grant the annual supplies was persisted in; the scanty resources of the public chest were fast declining; the tax ordinance was about to expire, and at length terminated on the 30th of September, 1848, on which day the stoppage of the supplies became positive and complete; and the colony was left as a helpless wreck to sink or swim as it best could. A few duties, such as the rum duty, and those collected by the Crown, were still received; but it required great prudence on the part of the executive to carry on the business of the public offices with a rapidly declining treasury, and no accession of revenue.

The truth of the report respecting the appointment of Henry Barkly, Esq., late M.P. for Leominster, and an influential West India proprietor, as the Governor of British Guiana, was confirmed by the arrival of his excellency on the 13th February, 1849, accompanied by Mrs. Barkly and family, as well as his private secretary, G. Dennis, Esq.

On his arrival, his excellency proceeded at once to the splendid residence of the late R. M. Jones, Esq., the hospitable proprietor of the fine plantation Rome and Houstoun, where he remained for some little time, until suitable accommodation could be made at Government House in Georgetown for the reception of his family. On the following day, Monday, the 14th of February, his excellency proceeded to town, and was sworn in with all the honours due on such occasions, and at once addressed the Court of Policy assembled to meet him.

It is unnecessary to attempt to give in this place a detailed account of the steps taken by his excellency to relieve the colony from the evils under which it laboured at the period of his advent. He found it, in spite of the assiduity and unwearied diligence of his predecessor, Lieutenant-Governor Walker, who had not had time to overcome the difficulties, in a state of gloomy discontent, if not of confusion. The prospects of the colony were dark and threatening, the feelings of the agriculturists and planters generally desponding and dissatisfied, the minds of all anxious and uncertain as to the future. The finances of the country were in a deplorable condition, the public credit was seriously shaken, the ruin of the colony, in fact, was in the perspective, and threatened soon to arrive. The governor was a planter himself—one who had suffered by the eventful changes since the emancipation of the slave in 1834, and who naturally sympathised with the feelings of the colonists. He had already visited the colony in 1846 to see his property in Berbice, and he was already acknowledged as a gentleman of ability, attainments, and experience. His career in the British Parliament had been marked by success; his character as a man of busi-

ness, of application and industry, of tact and talent, was admitted, and he was selected by Lord John Russell to undertake the administration of the Government of British Guiana, vacant by the retirement of Sir Henry Light.* The prestige of his name, his character, and his position, had preceded him to these shores.

The difficulties of his position were, however, formidable. He had to allay the storm of strife and contention which had been raging in the colony for so long a period; he had to restore the public credit, and refill the exhausted coffers of the public chest; to arouse the disheartened minds of the planters from the slough of despondency in which they were plunged, to energetic acts and vigorous efforts. He had, further, to reconcile them to a policy which was hateful to them, and which they, falsely perhaps, conceived to have been directed specially against their interests, whilst it, in fact, overlooked them to benefit millions.

He had to awaken their dormant energies, and to urge them to depend more on themselves and their own activity than on extraneous means of support; and, lastly, he had to attend to the general interests of all classes, to repress crime, encourage education and religion, and promote the general welfare of society. Such were some of the principal objects to be accomplished by his excellency, and it only remains briefly to state the results.

After multitudinous impediments and vexatious delays, the renewal of the supplies took place on the 8th August. The computed loss to the revenue from the commencement of this unhappy contest, in September, 1848, to the period of its cessation, was about 800,000 dollars; a

* Governor Light, on his return to England, was knighted by her Majesty for his services in this colony.

large sum to be lost within less than a year by so small a community.

From this period, without attempting to enter into any detail on the numerous wise and beneficial measures adopted by his excellency, the affairs of the colony assumed a more flourishing aspect. Immigration was renewed with eminent advantage to the planters, and to the labourers imported, who were judiciously located, and received all the care and attention that their situation required. The tendency to crime was repressed by the enactment and enforcement of such laws as seemed best calculated to intimidate lazy and hardened offenders. The dreaded punishments of the treadmill and of flogging were introduced, under certain restrictions, to check the increasing disposition to lawless and riotous behaviour; while a Trespass Bill, for which the colony is chiefly indebted to the Honourable A. D. Van der Gon Netscher, one of the most talented and energetic elective members of the Court of Policy, was framed, and has since been in useful and active operation, to the manifest advantage of landowners and others. A sum of money, 250,000*l.*, raised in England, and the payment of which was guaranteed by the British Government, was applied to the extension of the Demerara railway, and to the promotion of immigration, which latter project was regulated by sound and economical principles. The agitation raised by dissatisfied but patriotic reformers was soothed by the promise of an improvement in the political institutions of the colony, of which the new Franchise Bill was the precursor; while factious opposition was disarmed by the earnest but temperate conciliation of the executive. The objects of religion and charity were promoted by a liberal and catholic disposition to foster the several Christian institutions of the country. The numerous

villages and hamlets throughout the country rec e the benefit of a wise administration. An ordinance was passed, which appointed commissioners, with a chairman, to divide and allot the plots of land hitherto occupied in common by the proprietors of the property. Rural constables were established throughout the country for the maintenance of peace and order.

In order to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the entire condition of the colony, his excellency did not hesitate to visit each remote district. Exposed to the climate, to privations and inconveniences of every kind, he journeyed over the deplorable roads of the inland districts, and traversed the dangerous rapids and currents of the numerous rivers, making himself at home in the squatter's settlements and in the primitive bush, where, with the feelings of a naturalist, he combined pleasure with business. The wants of the humblest individuals, and the condition of society, its necessities and its obligations, were by such means investigated personally without the hazard and doubt attaching to the statements of others.

The usual meeting of the Combined Court took place early in 1853, and was attended with results too remarkable to be overlooked.

Not satisfied with concluding the ordinary business of the court, in regulating the expenditure and providing the ways and means of the ensuing year, in a spirit of rare cordiality and unanimity, his excellency further was fortunate enough to obtain from the elective members the renewal of a new Civil List, on terms as honourable to himself as creditable to the liberal feelings of the members of the Combined Court.

The terms of the new Civil List were similar to the one about to terminate on the 31st December, 1854.

The amount of the latter, exclusive of expenses of the Ecclesiastical Establishment, was 24,341*l.* 1s. 4d. The amount of the new Civil List, which was to commence from the 1st of January, 1855, was 22,641*l.* 1s. 4d., a deduction being made in the salaries of some of the highest officials, the governor included.*

An ordinance was also passed "to provide for the maintenance of Ministers of the Christian Religion in the colony of British Guiana." The amount allowed by the last Civil List for that purpose was 9,429*l.* 19s. 4d., or forty-five thousand, two hundred and sixty-three dollars and eighty-four cents: but an additional sum was annually granted by the Combined Court towards the support of other ministers of religion. The new ordinance provided the sum of seventy-eight thousand, nine hundred and eighty-six dollars and fifty-nine cents (78,986 dollars and 59 cents), for the support of the present Ecclesiastical Establishment of the colony (including the sum of 5000 dollars to be granted if applied for by other bodies of Christians).

In the execution of these important measures, his excellency was ably assisted by the Honourables J. Croal, A. D. Van der Gon Netscher, T. Porter, besides the official members and other gentlemen of the legislature.

The labours of his excellency were now, for the present, conducted to a more successful and triumphant close. He had disarmed opposition of its sting and danger; he had administered the affairs of the colony with a tact and skill, with a courtesy, and, at the same time, a firmness which have won for him the unre-

* Ordinance for granting to her Majesty the Queen, a fixed revenue for the support of the civil government of British Guiana, for a period of seven years, from the 1st of January, 1855. Demerara, 18th of April, 1853.

served admiration of all; he had, moreover, done all this without ostentation or display, and in a quiet, simple manner.

The prospects of the colony had improved during his government, the sugar crop had materially increased; the spirits of the planter were hopeful, if not sanguine; the general condition of the immigrants and creole peasantry good and promising; the best interests of society and the general welfare of all ameliorated. The system and practice of justice had been improved, the amount of crime materially lessened, the prospects of education and religion more cheering and promising, while public and private confidence seemed restored, and the good humour and satisfaction of all apparent in the handsome and cordial manner in which the inhabitants generally acknowledged the success of his excellency on his contemplated departure.

Separated from his family (for Mrs. Barkly and children had left the colony in April, 1852, for England), he determined to rejoin them now that the affairs of the colony had been so satisfactorily arranged and settled. A parting address to the Court of Policy, having plainly declared his intention of his temporary retirement from the colony on leave of absence, he was congratulated on the successful manner in which he had brought the public business to an issue, and received the good wishes of members on parting from them. On paying a farewell visit to Berbice, his excellency received a highly complimentary address, signed by about 300 of the most respectable inhabitants—a comparative large number considering the short stay made by the governor in that district of the country. Meanwhile, at a public meeting held in Georgetown, it was proposed to present his excellency, on his departure, with a piece of plate of the

value of 500 guineas, accompanied by an address, in consideration of "the services your excellency has already rendered this colony in extending and facilitating immigration, in improving the administration of justice, in upholding the public credit, in laying the foundation of measures calculated to impress on the minds of those who acquire property that they have duties to perform to society consequent on the possession thereof, and in supporting all institutions which have for their object to promote the welfare of this community, as well as for the courtesy and urbanity you have uniformly displayed in the discharge of your official duties, and for the promptness with which you have on all occasions forwarded the public business."

In a few days the sum of 500 guineas was raised, this handsome testimonial being subscribed to by about 280 of the most intelligent and respectable members of society, while the address rapidly received the signatures of about 600 persons from all classes of the community, and of the most varied political opinions.

The address and testimonial were presented to his excellency on the 9th of May by a deputation of influential gentlemen, when his excellency expressed his acknowledgments in an eloquent and suitable reply.

On the 11th of May his excellency, having previously held a farewell *levee*, which was numerously and respectably attended, proceeded on board the mail packet, *Eagle*, at half-past twelve, accompanied by a large party of friends, and escorted by a guard of honour from the garrison. The steamer left the river about half-past one P.M., under a salute from the fort, and having on board a large number of influential gentlemen about to leave the colony for a short time, among whom were his lordship the bishop, the Honourables John Croal and John

Daly. At one P.M. Lieut.-Governor Walker was sworn in with the usual honours, and addressed the Court of Policy, receiving at the same time the congratulation of his numerous friends and admirers.

END OF VOL. I.

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

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